

TS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 1994

Column

Army chemist turns on China's addicts

BEIJING (R) — A police chemist specialising in narcotics has turned his guns on a target — China's growing army of drug addicts, said Pan Kefu of the People's Liberation Army's Chemical Warfare Institute.

The chemist said he had developed a highly effective, low-cost "new medicine" to extricate drug addicts from severe addiction. He gave no details of his cure. Earlier this year a Chinese newspaper said it was marking a milestone in the fight against drug addiction by publishing a list of names of addicts who had been cured by the new medicine.

Doubting vicar delivers last sermon

STAPLEFIELD, Eng. (R) — A vicar who was asked by the Church of England to deliver the last sermon for a man who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, delivered his last sermon by addressing his congregation on the small West Sussex town of Staplefield for the last time.

Rev. Freeman, who had been preaching for 15 years in the church, said he felt a little nervous about the occasion but he felt it was his duty to deliver the sermon.

At least one person has put a warrant for his arrest.

Local bishop Dr Eric King ordered the ban after giving Rev. Freeman a year to consider remarks published in an 80-page book of the Church of England in which he had questioned the existence of God and the Anglican dogma of the Trinity of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Freeman wrote: "There is nothing out there or there is, we can't know it. On Sunday he insisted that he did not believe in an atheist. 'I am not an atheist — that is nonsense. I have proclaimed I believe in God,' he told parishioners. Some of them weeping, he said he had no regrets about writing the book and said he was in the church in 'space' within the church in different opinions about the ways in which God created the world.

His sermon was well received by many in his congregation who felt he was a little too modern in his thinking for the predominantly rural parish.

He said he was a man and he has been very kind but... it is like being an astronaut who doesn't believe in the moon," said parishioner Lesley Pritchard-Gordon.

20 cows roasted alive during thunderstorms

PERIGUEUX, France (AP) — Twenty cows were roasted alive after lightning struck the barn they were sheltering in, firemen in this southern town said.

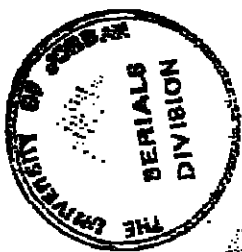
The cows were victims of violent storms which swept across the Dordogne region Sunday.

Firemen answered around 11 emergency calls in the space of just over three hours.

They found the barn where the cows were housed in flames. The fire was caused by lightning strikes.

Israel opposes U.S.-Saudi deal

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel said on Tuesday it would oppose the sale of a U.S. spy satellite to Saudi Arabia should the satellite be used to spy on the Jewish state. "If in fact it will be used for intelligence purposes that are liable to hurt us, we will object to its sale," an official quoted Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as telling a committee. The newspaper Haaretz reported on Tuesday that the Clinton administration had asked Israel to accept the deal and refrain from lobbying against it. "Israel rushed to express opposition, arguing that if such a satellite were sold to Saudi Arabia, Israel's qualitative military edge would be compromised," it said. The newspaper's military commentator Zeev Schiff called the sale "a clear violation of the promise by several presidents to preserve Israel's qualitative edge." "The Saudis are double talking. They think that the entire world wants their money. We don't need Saudi money. We will build the Middle East without the Saudis," Mr. Peres said. "They should stop thinking that whoever has oil, has everything," he told the committee.



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King voices full confidence in people of Jordan, says plebiscite an option to judge opposition size

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has said he was seriously contemplating holding a national referendum on Jordan's moves for a negotiated peace with Israel and expressed full confidence in the people of Jordan.

The King was speaking during a meeting in London on Monday with a group of foreign, diplomatic and Middle East editors of major British newspapers after a working lunch with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.

The King, who arrived in London on Friday after a historic July 25 meeting in Washington with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shimon Peres and U.S. President Bill Clinton, said the voices of opposition to the peace process were part of the democracy that Jordan enjoys.

In a democracy this invariably happens, and there is naturally going to be opposition, but they are not a majority, the King said.

The King said he felt that this has to be presented to the people, and that he was seriously contemplating holding a national referendum to determine the "exact size of the opposition," expressing full confidence in the people of Jordan.

On Jerusalem, King Hussein said: "I have received several invitations to visit Jerusalem. I feel it is my right as a Muslim, a Hashemite and as an Arab to visit Jerusalem and Hebron and in Jordan I do so without anybody's permission."

On timing, the King told reporters: "As to when, I don't know but it will happen sometime soon, God willing."

In his meeting with the journalists, the King outlined the basis of Jordan's commitment, efforts and drive towards a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict over many years, culminating in the convening of the Madrid peace conference, the bilateral, multilateral, and more recently, the trilateral talks that ensued. He emphasized that Jordan is committed as ever to arriving at a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the region.

The King summarised the main events of the last few years, saying that Jordan has since 1974 adhered to recognizing and supporting the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, and that it was in this spirit that Jordan severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, with the exception of the holy places in Jerusalem, in order to allow the representatives of the Palestinian people to assume charge of their own destiny and future, on their national soil.

He stressed that it was within the same context that Jordan provided the umbrella for the Palestinians to enter the Madrid process. This enabled the Palestinians not only to participate, but also to have, at Jordan's insistence, their own track of negotiations with Israel.

The King maintained that recent progress leading up to the Washington summit with Mr. Rabin, at President Clinton's invitation, could have taken place at any time following the establishment of the trilateral U.S.-Jordanian-Israeli Economic Commission after the meeting between President Clinton, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, last October.

However, in the final analysis, the timing was just right for what will hopefully represent a very significant step forward towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

The King said that the Jordanian-Israeli common agenda, which was initiated the day after the signing of the declaration of principles between Israel and the



new opportunities for cooperation that go beyond the regional borders, to include the building of strong partnerships between the Middle East and Europe," President Klesstil said.

The King also received a similar cable from President Mohammad Jawhar of the Comoros who congratulated the King over the Washington Declaration, which recognised Jordan's historic role in the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem.

Other cables of support were sent by the director general of the Jordan Economic and Social Organisation for Retired Servicemen, and chairman and members of the Hittin camp services improvement committee.

Austria, Comoros congratulate King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received cables of support and appreciation from world leaders and representatives of the various sectors in Jordan over the signing of the Washington Declaration.

Austrian President Thomas Klestil said in a cable: "Your courageous step has given a clear signal to the other parties in the region to settle the remaining differences and clear the way for a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East."

Mr. Klestil said the King's efforts to establish peace had given "strength to the moderate parties who call for coexistence in the region which has suffered so long from wars and conflicts."

before signing the peace treaty, that progress became possible.

In the spirit of consultation and participation in the decision making process in Jordan, and given the fact that parliament was not in session, the King met with parliamentarians on his return to Jordan, and through them addressed the nation at large to explain the reasons for Jordan's intention to move forward. The response, His Majesty said, was overwhelming in terms of support. His Majesty said it was quite heartening to know that

Palestinians and the subsequent meeting of the trilateral commission reflected Jordan's determination to pursue vigorously its national priorities.

Following his June trip to Washington, the King said that he was fully convinced that it was high time to move ahead. The King indicated that the reason for the delay in moving ahead before was Israel's insistence on signing a peace treaty and then negotiating its various elements. It was only when Israel finally accepted the Jordanian proposal that negotiations over all the elements of the common agenda had to take place

peace talks through legal channels, stressing that they will not "exceed constitutional limits."

Minister of Justice Hisham Al Tel said the government was concerned with upholding the law, which he said governs the executive authority's dealings with the opposition. "We do not have red lines," he said, "we have the law to apply."

While saying that "voices of (constructive) opposition are welcome and indeed necessary," Prince Hassan emphasised that the interests of the Kingdom would not gain from attacks on the country's institutions and leadership.

"Our national defence will not be served by attacks on the country's leadership or Armed Forces, the very people who are ultimately answerable for the maintenance of the safety, security and advancement of the country," Prince Hassan said.

Commenting on the latest developments on the Jordanian-Israeli track of the peace talks, Prince Hassan stressed that the attainment of peace was a difficult task which requires a great deal of delicate efforts and hard work.

"History is replete with examples of the extent to which work for peace can be far more dangerous and delicate than work for war and the perpetuation of the violence, the hardship and the national impoverishment that war entails," the Crown Prince told the Jordan Times.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday addresses soldiers during a visit he paid to an Armed Forces division (Armed Forces photo)

Regent: Armed Forces symbolise steadfastness

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Tuesday that the Jordanian Armed Forces represent a symbol of Jordan's steadfastness, stressing that Jordan, which stood by its nation, would remain faithful to the Arab causes.

"Any one trying to tamper with the Jordanian steadfastness will be harming the steadfastness of the whole nation, Prince Hassan said in an address to the group of army officers of the Third Royal Armoured Division.

The Regent said "positive opposition in which we believe is one that is based on the differences in views which should not harm the national cause."

Prince Hassan toured the unit's positions and inspected training programmes. He also watched field exercises and took part in them.

In his address to the troops, the Regent conveyed to them the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein and

thanked the officers for their efforts in training the troops. "Yesterday and before I came out to this field I spoke to the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, King Hussein, who we hope will soon come back safely. He sends you his greetings of confidence and feeling of pride in the comrades of arms and in the troops who are affiliated to and bent on upholding the principles of the Arab Prophet's army and the message which is based on faith and the sacrifices of the fathers and the forefathers and the nation."

"The King reminds us that sense of belonging to the message means employing science to upgrade performance, professionalism in all fields and utilising time to define priorities at the level of the Armed Forces for reconstruction."

"This means reconstructing and developing the Armed Forces and their capabilities employing what the King will make available

to us so that Jordan will remain a fortress of stability, God willing, and for ever."

"Our faith should be manifested through our refined manners, the Jordanian Armed Forces' manners and discipline."

"The Armed Forces remain the only tool for defending the homeland in the face of any external aggression and they constitute the base for protecting the Constitution and safeguarding national unity."

"The Armed Forces will remain by the side of right and they will continue their silent endeavours around the year, following training programmes day and night so that they can ensure the country's stability and security."

"Being soldiers to some, unknown to some people, you are well-known to King Hussein. May God bless you all and protect Jordan and the nation."

The Prince later distributed awards to officers excelling in their performance.

King meets Qatari minister

LONDON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received in his residence here Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jabr Al Thani, who conveyed to the King the greetings of Qatari Emir Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani. King Hussein and the Qatari minister reviewed the latest developments on the Arab arena, particularly the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations.

The audience was attended by Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the Jordanian and Qatari ambassadors in London.

Arab Bank to open in Gaza

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Arab Bank will soon open branches in the Palestinian self-rule areas after a 27-year absence, officials said Tuesday.

The decision comes amid rising interest from the Arab banking sector in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. At least two banks have set up branches in the self-rule areas and more have promised to follow suit. Shukri Bishara, a director at the Arab Bank, met Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and later told reporters new branches would be opened within two months in Gaza and Jericho.

Jewish settler dies

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A Jewish settler stabbed a month ago died Tuesday in a Tel Aviv hospital. A member of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, attacked Yoram Sakni, 50, on July 1 in the settlement of Kfarit Netafim on the West Bank.

The settler was in a coma for several weeks. The suspected assailant, Mustafa Izzan, disclosed he had just been released from prison as part of the autonomy deal that Hamas has rejected.

Regent urges Jordanians to rise above 'pettiness of day-to-day politics' in tackling national issues

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday expressed hope that Jordanians would "rise above the pettiness of day-to-day politics" when dealing with national issues with long-term consequences for the country and its interests.

The Crown Prince said the higher interests of the nation should guide the actions of people who participate in government and governance.

"Those who lead and participate in government and governance have to take the safety and interest of the nation as a body, rather than particular parties or groups, into prime consideration," Prince Hassan told the Jordan Times.

The Crown Prince said Jordan welcomes constructive opposition which can only enrich the fabric of public debate but stressed that it is imperative for citizens privileged to wield influence on the body politic to exercise self control in whatever they publicly do or say.

"Citizens holding the public interest and trust are expected to uphold the ethics of public debate and defend national unity and solidarity in the face of challenges," Prince Hassan told the Jordan Times one day after he underlined the need to understand the concept of the freedom of expression during a meeting with Islamists and other

independent members of the Lower House of Parliament as well as Cabinet ministers.

During the meeting, which was requested by Acting Lower House Speaker Abdul Razzaq Tubeisat, Prince Hassan criticised as irresponsible acts the abuse of freedom of expression at public forums.

"Incitements to violence from pulpits or other public platforms do not constitute democracy but a perversion of democratic right," said the Regent.

Prince Hassan stressed that neither the economy of the Kingdom nor the cause of Jordan and Palestine will be served "if we engage in name-calling... or by irresponsible recriminations or accusations of treachery."

During his meeting with lawmakers, the Crown Prince criticised the attempts by some political parties to exploit the issues of poverty, unemployment and national debt to gain political support.

He also wondered whether it was the prerogative of one political party over another to discuss alleged corruption and mismanagement of the resources of the states at public platforms such as mosques.

The meeting followed a controversy between the government and the Islamic Action Front (IAF) over the questioning of some IAF deputies by the



public prosecutor for delivering sermons that "harmed" the national unity and the Armed Forces.

Sources told the Jordan Times that IAF Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber went beyond what is "legally permissible and ethically acceptable" by attacking Jordan and urging disturbances in one of his Friday sermons before the Jordanian-Israeli summit in Washington on July 25.

But the sources added that the issue was solved during a meeting between Deputy Prime Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi and members of the opposition when Mr. Hindawi stressed that the government tolerates constitutional opposition but will not allow acts that could jeopardise the stability of the Kingdom.

Islamist deputies pledged during their meeting with Prince Hassan to express their opposition to the

Jordanian, Israeli experts meet to prepare for crossing, bilaterals

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter
with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordanian and Israeli experts began two days of talks Tuesday to prepare for the next round of bilateral negotiations on border and water rights scheduled to begin on Aug. 8 and lay the ground for opening a crossing point for tourists in the south.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, noted that the opening of the crossing point was one of the issues contained in the July 25 Washington Declaration signed by His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The talks took place at the same tent camp where Jordanian and Israeli negotiators

launched their first talks in the region on July 18. The site is about 13 kilometres north of Aqaba.

The Aug. 8 talks will be held at the Moriah Hotel on the Israeli side of the Dead Sea, the Jerusalem Post reported Tuesday.

Apart from sorting out the issues that are expected to be tackled by senior negotiating teams, the experts meeting Tuesday and Wednesday were to decide the exact route of the crossing point for tourists.

Work is expected to begin on access roads and the crossing point immediately after final agreement is reached on the precise location.

According to reports from the Israeli side, Israel proposed a crossing point about four kilometres north of the port of Eilat. The delegations

visited the site, and Shlomo Tushinsky, a local Israeli official, was quoted as saying the Jordanian delegates objected to the site. But talks were continuing.

Jordan has proposed a site further north, nearer to the place where the talks were taking place, but Israelis were resisting it because of internal opposition from environmentalist groups which say the area is a nature reserve.

Mr. Rabin told reporters Tuesday that the experts were seeking a roadlink "from an Israeli sovereign area to a Jordanian sovereign area."

As and when completed, the roadlink is expected to be opened by King Hussein and Mr. Rabin in a meeting expected Tuesday.

(Continued on page 7)

Rabin rules out immediate negotiations on Jerusalem

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel will not discuss the future of Jerusalem before 1996, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Tuesday, rejecting a demand from Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat that talks begin immediately.

"The negotiations on the permanent solution between them and us will take place two years after the completion of the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho solution... which means the middle of May 1996," Mr. Rabin said.

The peace agreement signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel last year said that negotiations on the final status of Jerusalem should take place no later than two years after the introduction of Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, that

occurred in May.

On Monday Mr. Arafat accused Israel of forcing the Jerusalem issue to the forefront and demanded immediate negotiations.

Palestinians are upset that the Israel-Jordan peace declaration signed in Washington last week reaffirmed the historic role of King Hussein over the city's Muslim holy sites.

Mr. Rabin spoke with reporter after a tour of the national police headquarters, built by Israel in Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Rabin repeated Israel's long-held position that the city must remain "united" under Israeli rule.

"Jerusalem is united under Israeli sovereignty and will be Israel's capital now and in the future," he said.

Jordan has said it supported the PLO's campaign to gain political sovereignty over East Jerusalem, adding that this did not clash with its religious custody of Muslim sites there.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres tried to play down the dispute, saying on Tuesday "we're not talking about a special status, but of a role... the present Jordanian role."

In Cairo, chief PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath insisted Tuesday Mr. Arafat is entitled to demand immediate talks on the final status of Jerusalem.

"The question of starting permanent settlement negotiations now is in the DoP," Nabil Shaath said, referring to the Israeli-PLO declaration.

(Continued on page 7)

Lebanon says Hizbollah will fight

BEIRUT (Agencies) Lebanon is defying the United States by refusing to curb the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God), which Washington says must be defeated.

In a hard-hitting speech on army day, President Elias Hrawi on Monday called the pro-Iranian group's fight against Israeli occupation in South Lebanon legitimate and said it would continue until Israel promised to withdraw.

Mr. Hrawi angrily accused Israel of holding Lebanon hostage by falsely accusing it of responsibility for bombings in which it had no part.

He said Israel was also deliberately wrecking South Lebanon to protect its 15-kilometre wide occupation zone.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher last week linked Hizbollah to bloody bombings of Israeli and Jewish centres in Buenos Aires and London and said the group "must be defeated."

U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley walked among the VIP audience as Mr. Hrawi told an army day parade that the Hizbollah-led resistance to Israeli occupation is legitimate.

He said the resistance — which has killed 10 Israeli soldiers this year and injured dozens — would continue until Israel announced a pullout

from the south.

"Resistance to the occupation is legitimate. It will cease to exist when the occupation is no more. Let Israel announce its withdrawal or let it present a timetable for its withdrawal, then the Lebanese state will pledge to maintain security there (in the south)," Mr. Hrawi said.

He denounced allegations of Lebanese involvement in the Buenos Aires and London bombings as an unacceptable aggression against Lebanon.

"They claim that Lebanon is responsible for any explosion that has taken place or will take place in any corner of the world."

"Israel has no right to accuse us falsely of something in which we have no say whatsoever."

"This false accusation is in itself an aggression. How long will this insistence on keeping our country hostage for the settlement of problems last?" Mr. Hrawi asked.

Lebanon has lived in fear for several days of an Israeli blitz against the south in response to the Buenos Aires and London bombings.

Many villagers have fled their homes, although Lebanese security sources and residents in the south told Reuters on Monday that most of those who had left were people who had come for summer holidays, not

permanent residents.

A week-long Israeli blitz last year killed 150 southerners, destroyed thousands of homes and sent 300,000 people fleeing northwards.

Israeli troops and their South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia allies frequently shell villages, towns and cities in the south, regularly killing civilians and destroying their homes, in response to Hizbollah's attacks.

"Israel has no right to ruin our land with the pretext of preserving the security of its occupation of our lands," Mr. Hrawi said.

"The road to peace does not accept that the security of the occupation comes from the non-security of those who stay on their land," he added.

Mr. Hrawi said it was up to Beirut, not Israel, to establish security in South Lebanon.

"We take care of our own security," Mr. Hrawi said. Last week he said he would send 25,000 Lebanese army soldiers to the south to maintain security and prevent cross-border attacks on Israel once its troops left.

A government official said the United States will try to persuade Israel against a punitive raid on Lebanon on the eve of a new Middle East peace mission by Mr. Christopher.

Ambassador Hambley vowed to Foreign Minister

Fares Bouez that his government would try to prevent any Israeli action which could compromise Mr. Christopher's peace efforts, the official said.

"There is no hard evidence to pin the blame on Hizbollah or on any other Iranian-backed group based in Lebanon," said the official, who declined to be named.

"The Americans realise any Israeli military action at this time could compromise Mr. Christopher's efforts to break the deadlock in the negotiations, namely because they see the possibility of progress on the Syrian-Israeli track," he added.

He said the "ball is in Israel's court."

The official also reported that Syria had voiced concern to Lebanese leaders over the possibility of a new flare-up of violence in South Lebanon.

"Damascus has stressed that any attack on Lebanon would endanger the negotiations," the official said, adding that Mr. Bouez was in permanent contact with his Syrian counterpart Farouk Al Sharaa.

Mr. Christopher was expected to return to the region on Aug. 8 in a renewed effort to break the deadlock in Syria's talks with Israel. He last shuttled between Israel and Syria two weeks ago.

U.S.: Hizbollah tied to Argentina blast

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Circumstantial evidence links the July 18 bombing of a Buenos Aires Jewish cultural centre in which over 100 people were killed to the terrorist group, Hizbollah, according to the State Department's lead official on counter terrorism.

In testimony before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on international security and human rights, Barbara Bodine said Monday the "modus operandi" of the bombing suggests Hizbollah committed the bombings against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Aid Association (AMIA).

In addition, she said, the apparent bombing July 19 of a commuter plane outside of Colon, Panama, in which 21 people were killed also could have been the work of terrorists. It was "worth noting" that a Hizbollah splinter group, Ansarallah, has made references to the events in Argentina and Panama, she added.

Ms. Bodine, the department's coordinator for counter terrorism, said the bombings demonstrate "both the unfortunate global reach of terrorists" and their willingness to attack "soft" targets, "chosen only because of their

symbolic value."

The timing of the attack in Buenos Aires, she added, occurred "just as prospects for peace in the Middle East are brighter than they have been this century." Bodine assured members of the subcommittee that "the forces opposed to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East will not meet their objective by attacks on civilians literally thousands of miles away."

A few months ago, she said, the United States "approached governments throughout the region, expressing our concern over the growing Hizbollah presence." But the responses from many governments in Latin America, she said, "have proven inadequate."

The most recent bombing in Buenos Aires and a similar 1992 attack against the Israeli embassy in that city have all the "hallmarks of a Hizbollah operation." Although it claimed credit for the 1992 bombing, Ms. Bodine said, Hizbollah has denied responsibility for the latest attack.

What occurred at the AMIA, she said, "is a tragic parallel to the bombing of a Pan American flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988."

Just as the Pan Am bomb-

ing demonstrated the callousness and savagery of international terrorism, so too did AMIA.

The Pan Am bombing and similar acts of terrorism in the 1980s, she said, "invigorated many states to combat terrorism through the application of the rule of law and by bringing pressure to bear on those few states that support terrorism."

"I trust that the AMIA bombing and the incidents that have followed it will produce the same consequences for those who undertake such attacks and those governments that help make such attacks happen."

Six governments, Ms. Bodine said, remain on the State Department's list for supporting terrorism — Iran, Iraq, Syria, Cuba, Libya, and Sudan.

The United States worked with Buenos Aires authorities in attempting to solve the AMIA bombing by sending investigative and forensic specialists to that city. As requested by Argentina, Ms. Bodine said, the U.S. team is now analysing evidence collected in the case.

To prevent further acts of terrorism in Argentina, she said, the U.S. has also provided extensive training

through the State Department's anti-terrorism training assistance programme. Among the courses offered are post-blast investigation, explosive incident countermeasures, and a terrorist interdiction seminar.

Argentine Ambassador Raul Granillo Ocampo told the hearing that the AMIA bombing "has been considered the most important terrorist incident in Argentine history and the most serious attack on a Jewish community anywhere in the world since World War II."

Besides the 104 killed in the blast, he said, 227 people were injured and another 15 are still missing.

Rejecting criticism that Argentina has become a haven for anti-Jewish groups, Granillo Ocampo said the country's Jewish community is an "integral part of our nation of immigrants." Thus, the AMIA bombing aroused deep feelings of sorrow and anger in Argentina. To show its sorrow, he said, the government proclaimed three days of national mourning.

The bombing, he said, "has inspired Argentina to close ranks once again with its Jewish community."

Cairo thinks again on veils at schools

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's Ministry of Education, swayed by a torrent of protest from Muslim conservatives, has had second thoughts about a decree requiring parental permission for girls to wear the veil at school next academic year.

Education Minister Hussein Kamel Bahaddin was quoted on Tuesday as saying that even if their parents were against it, girls could go to school wearing the hijab, a garment which covers the head and neck but not the face.

"If the girl's father refuses to let her wear the hijab, we will call him in to try to convince him that his daughter is right, as long as she is convinced," the government newspaper Al Akhbar said he told a group of Muslim preachers.

The opposition newspaper Al Wafd gave a slightly different account of the minister's new position.

"The ministry will not prevent any girl who wears the veil voluntarily from going to school, even if her guardian objects," it quoted him as saying. "He said the school would simply inform him (the guardian) of the situation," it added.

Ministry officials were not available on Tuesday to say what would happen if the parents and the girl continued to disagree.

In an interview published on Friday, Mr. Bahaddin said clearly that girls wishing to wear the veil at school could do so only if their parents sent the school their written approval.

He said the aim was to stop fundamentalist teachers from imposing the veil on schoolgirls by force.

"We have noticed during the past school year that some extremist teachers have imposed the veil on girls in primary schools," he told Al

Akhbar.

"We had several cases in which schoolgirls were severely beaten (by teachers) to make them wear the veil. We have reacted very strongly and firmly against such conduct because these acts are educationally prohibited."

A committee of Muslim scholars from the Azhar, Egypt's ancient seat of Islamic learning, said the decree was a violation of Islamic law, most versions of which say women should expose only their faces and hands in public.

"To impose a penalty on a Muslim girl who observes God's order in this matter, by depriving her of education and preventing her from going to school... is to punish obedience to God's orders and to encourage disobedience to God Almighty," the Fatwa Committee of the Azhar said.

It recommended the minis-

try reconsider the decree.

Opposition newspapers of most persuasions have also been hostile to the decree. "All Egypt rose up to confront the decree... people felt their beliefs were under threat and that someone was trying to suppress God's law for the sake of a wicked secularism," said the right-wing paper Al Ahrar.

Mr. Bahaddin told the Muslim preachers on Monday that the aim of the decree was to prevent schoolgirls being swept up in "harmful deviant currents trying to give political significance to a religious garment."

Muslim militants have been waging a campaign of violence against the Egyptian security forces for the past two years and more than 400 people have been killed.

The level of violence has fallen off since early May and the government says it is winning the war against them.

UNHCR welcomes Jordan's moves, says more needed

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHCR) has welcomed the progress in the democratisation process in Jordan and the end to many measures which it earlier considered as restrictions on basic freedoms.

A report on the situation of human rights in Jordan was among the issues considered during a July 4-29 session in Geneva along with similar reports from Italy, Cyprus, Togo, Azerbaijan, Slovenia and Burundi, a statement from the U.N. information service said.

Among a concern expressed by the committee was the high number of offences punishable by death and the number of death penalties handed down by the court in Jordan.

International Human Rights activists, while expressing understanding of the Jordanian argument that death penalties for murders and other major crimes are inevitable, particularly given the tribal fabric of the Kingdom, are pushing for a reduction of the number of crime punishable by death as the first step.

The basis for the committee's review is the concerned country's compliance with the Civil and Political Rights Covenant, an international document on human rights. Jordan is a signatory to the document.

The committee's assessment is based on a review of how far the individual countries which are signatory to the document are complying with its provisions.

The committee meeting acknowledged the progress made by Jordan in various fields of human rights.

"The committee welcomed the democratic process, initiated in 1989, the lifting of the state of emergency, and the abolition of martial law, the 1935 Defence Act as well as

the release of political prisoners, restoration of withdrawn passports, reinstatement of civil servants who had been dismissed for political reasons, and the institution of the right to appeal to the supreme court against decisions of the State Security Court," the U.N. statement said.

The committee also recommended that the "state party continue the legislative review" envisaged by the Kingdom's national charter, which was endorsed in 1991, and called for the incorporation of all "substantive provisions in the covenant into domestic law."

It also called on the government to "ensure that the restrictions imposed under national legislation do not go beyond those permitted under the covenant."

"The committee noted that the general legal framework was still not in conformity with the provisions of the covenant," it said. "It was concerned that the State Security Court continued to exercise special jurisdiction and that ordinary law can be suspended in emergency situations, contrary to the provisions of article 4 of the covenant which prohibit derogation from some categories of human rights."

"It expressed regret that despite some improvement, the state party has not embarked on all the necessary reforms to combat the factors still impeding equality between men and women. The Constitution did not guarantee the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, and there were still gender disparities in law or practice with regard to such issues as status within the family, inheritance rights, the right to leave the country and participation in public life."

"... In spite of the adoption of the new press act, freedom of expression was still restricted through the control exercised by the authorities

over the state radio and television and by measures of harassment against some journalists," the statement said.

In Azerbaijan, the committee noted, there have been reports of cases of summary execution, enforced or involuntary disappearance, torture and other acts of violence against the person, as well as arbitrary detention. Similar breaches have been reported in Togo, where, the committee noted, failure to exclude violators of human rights from service in the military or the security forces could seriously undermine the transition to democracy.

Regarding Italy, the committee was concerned about cases of ill-treatment of persons by police and security forces and length of preventive detention.

Pre-trial detention, meanwhile, was one of the causes of concern with respect to the situation in Slovenia. This state party also accorded special treatment to its Hungarian, Italian and Gypsy minorities, treatment that should be extended to all minorities, according to the committee.

Provisions regarding the death penalty were among the causes of concern in relations to the situation in Cyprus, where domestic law allows application of the death penalty to persons between 16 and 18 years of age, in conflict with the provisions of the covenant. The committee was also concerned about cases of ill-treatment of detainees in Cyprus.

In Burundi, the committee deplored the grave and repeated violations of human rights which occurred following the events of the autumn of 1993. The army, police, gendarmerie and security police continued to be the source of numerous human rights violations. The committee also deplored the lack of investigations regarding those violations.

Malaria spreading fast in Iraqi Kurdistan

ERBIL (AFP) — Malaria is spreading fast in Kurdish-held northern Iraq, striking thousands of people, mainly because of a shortage of insecticides and too many rice-paddies.

According to the Kurdish health authorities, 29,000 people caught the fever between March and June, compared to a total of 35,000 for the whole of 1993. The disease has hit hardest in remote villages.

In Taq-Taq, 100 kilometres south of the main Iraqi Kurdish town of Erbil, between 30 and 50 patients receive each day to a clinic to receive tablets.

Samet Hidayet Ahmad, a 32-year-old policeman who looks more like 45, said he first went down with malaria last year.

There is plenty of medicine to treat patients and so there are no deaths, said Dr. Ali Berzinji. But the problem, he said, was to try and prevent the disease, primarily by spraying crops.

"For the whole of northern Iraq, we need at least 270 tonnes of the insecticide malathion. We have received only 20 tonnes," from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), he explained.

Another reason for malaria in northern Iraq is that farmers, who used to grow fruits, are turning increasingly to rice and the paddy-fields are a breeding ground for the mosquitoes which spread the disease, Dr. Berzinji added.

Rice has turned into an attractive crop for farmers because of the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait four years ago and because of the Iraqi blockade of the north, ruled by the Kurds in defiance of Baghdad.

Israeli schools to teach reform, Judaism

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israeli schools will reverse years of teaching only orthodox Jewish views and start teaching the conservative and reform streams as well, Israel's education minister says.

"Orthodox Judaism has no monopoly on the education system," said Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein. "Our tradition as a people is to be open to all streams of Judaism."

It was another small dent in the Israeli religious system for the conservative and reform streams, which reject orthodox belief that the Bible is God's revealed word.

In recent years, Israeli courts have recognised non-orthodox conversions, and have ordered government funds directed at conservative and reform institutions.

The changes reduce the influence of Israel's rabbinate, which controls sectors of civilian life such as marriage and divorce. The rabbinate recognises only orthodox Jewry, and regards reform and conservative Judaism as apostasy.

There are relatively few reform and conservative Jews in Israel. But they predominate in American Jewish life,

and Israeli orthodox rejection of the other movements has threatened to undermine American Jewish support for Israel.

Mr. Rubinstein said the decision to teach all streams of Judaism stemmed from the recommendations of a commission investigating why Israeli youth are increasingly cut off from tradition.

Commission chairwoman Aliza Shenhar told reporters that the commission found that high school students dropped out of Jewish studies classes because they found the teaching approach too narrow.

Teaching Judaism must reflect the variety, the many faces of Judaism," she said. "It should not create an un-historical Judaism, unilateral with one answer, but a Judaism with many questions, arguments and approaches."

The Shenhar commission was appointed three years ago by Mr. Rubinstein's predecessor, Zevulun Hammer, who represented the orthodox National Religious Party. Mr. Hammer appointed the commission because of drastic drops in attendance at Jewish studies classes.

The former director-gener-

al of the education ministry, Zevulun Orlev, said orthodox was not to blame.

"The government is to blame," he said. "This is a society that is bankrupt."

Wedding contract

Volunteer archaeologists discovered a Jewish marriage contract dating two centuries before the time of Christ, featuring the earliest example of the Hebrew script used nowadays, a statement said Monday.

The seven pieces of ceramic tile that make up part of the ketuba — a Jewish marriage contract — were uncovered by American volunteers digging at the site of the Biblical city of Marissa, in central Israel, an Israel antiquities authority statement said.

The script is of the type, known as "Square Jewish," used in Israel and throughout the Jewish world today.

It is the oldest example of the script in the world, the statement said, and its existence suggests that the script's use was consolidated at that time.

'Egypt, Iran hold secret meetings in Damascus'

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian and Iranian officials have held secret meetings in Damascus since June in a bid to improve relations, an Islamic newspaper here reported Tuesday.

The bi-weekly Al Shaab said four meetings had been held under Syrian mediation since Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Mosa met his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati on the sidelines of a Non-Aligned Movement meeting in Cairo.

Al Shaab also reported that Mr. Mosa and Mr. Velayati had exchanged several messages since their June meeting, in which "cordial and calm diplomatic language" was used.

An Iranian economic delegation visited Cairo in July and presented Egyptian officials with a "plan of action" to promote economic cooperation and mutual investment, the paper said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Tao Tao
17:30 N.B.A. sport
18:45 Le Journal De L'Histoire
19:00 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
21:10 The Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:20 The Nanny
22:50 Fokdack

PRAYER TIMES

04:19 Fajr
05:47 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:42 Asr
16:22 'Asr
19:38 Maghreb
21:06 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swidieh, Tel. 810740
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

771231.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephrem Church Tel. 771251.
Assiout International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 694195.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Loyal Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fine with temperatures below average, clouds appearing at low altitudes, and winds north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 19/29
Aqaba 25/37
Deserts 16/31
Jordan Valley 24/36

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 27 Aqaba 35. Humidity readings: Amman 41 per cent, Aqaba 27 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ramzi Mazwi 794788
Dr. Khalil Jhali 740740
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485
Fines pharmacy 661512
Ferdows pharmacy 78336
Al Asma pharmacy 637053
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637601
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632
IREB:
Dr. Faysal Al Qadi 248743
Al Qadi pharmacy (-)
ZARQA:
Dr. Tareq Hijawi 855445
Khalifeh pharmacy 855417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 611111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 771211
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 692590
Public Security Department 630231
Hotel Complaints 605800
Water and Sewerage 661176
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repair 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 771111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 812615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akheh Maternity, J. Amn 644241/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mathew, J. Amman 63140
Palestine, Shamsieh 664174
Shamsieh Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushter Hospital 667221/9
The Islamic, Abdali 661127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Mubareen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 777101/3
Army, Shamsieh 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6024050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983523
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Great Catholic Hospital 0272225
IBBID:
Princess Basmah Hospital 0272555
Great Catholic Hospital 0272225
Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital 02724700
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 03314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia In-

ternational Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:00 Chicago (add) (RJ)
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:45 Larnaca (RJ)
12:25 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
14:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:15 Madrid (RJ)
17:35 Athens, Cairo (RJ)
18:25 Istanbul (RJ)
18:25 New Delhi (RJ)
19:00 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:10 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
19:30 Rome (RJ)
22:45 Rome (add) (RJ)
00:00 Beirut (RJ)
01:20 Cairo

Haiti's military rulers brace for possible U.S.-led invasion

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — Haiti's military rulers braced for a possible American-led invasion but the Caribbean nation was calm before the threatened storm.

The United States, in a move escalating the effects of the trade embargo Washington hopes will convince the military leaders to leave voluntarily, said late Monday it would station troops at the Dominican border to stop the flow of illegal fuel entering Haiti.

Responding to a U.N. vote Sunday that approved a U.S.-led invasion force, Provisional President Emile Jonassaint declared a state of siege.

In a pre-dawn decree read over state-run television and radio Monday, Mr. Jonassaint, 81, called the vote a violation of international rights. He said his country, which U.S. troops occupied for almost two decades after moving in to quell violence in 1915, would never surrender.

Television screened footage of Haitian army manoeuvres.

Mr. Jonassaint and members of his de facto government, who seized power from democratically-elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide in a bloody 1991 coup, did not say what measures they would take.

But radio stations said that under the declaration all constitutional guarantees are suspended and civil power is transferred to the military.

Meetings can be dispersed, newspapers, radio and TV stations closed, searches carried out without warrants and a curfew imposed.

The U.N. Security Council voted 12-0 Sunday to approve a resolution giving the United States a green light to lead an invasion of Haiti to remove the military leaders who ousted the populist former President months after he won a landslide presidential election.

Many U.S. officials have argued for delaying any intervention to give trade sanctions — imposed by the United States and the United Nations to put pressure on the country's military rulers — time to work.

U.S. embassy spokesman Stanley Schragger told Reuters that Washington expected to sign an agreement with the Dominican Republic within days allowing about 90 U.S. Dominican and other soldiers to seal the border with Haiti. The move would stop fuel which has poured across the border.

American officials have repeatedly said an invasion is not "imminent" but President Clinton has refused to rule out military action.

Almost 2,000 U.S. Marines are stationed on ships north of Haiti and hundreds more have been practicing invasion techniques on neighbouring islands.

Although many Haitians were jolted by the news of the vote and state of siege, the nation remained outwardly normal.

Streets were calm near the presidential palace, where there was an increased show of security. Prices of fuel and other essential commodities, which have tripled since a trade embargo slapped on Haiti in May and June, showed no dramatic rise in the bustling street markets of Port-Au-Prince on news of the state of siege.

In the countryside, where remote villages are further isolated by the lack of newspapers or radio, many who heard the news Monday greeted it with fatalism.

In the northwest town of Gonaives, a bedrock of support for Mr. Aristide, voodoo drums rang out in the pre-dawn hours after Mr. Jonassaint's address to the nation. One Haitian suggested they were ceremonies to hurry the departure of the military rulers but it was impossible to tell the reason for the ceremony.

An 80-year-old woman, rising just after sunrise for the long day's work, gave a common response to troubled times, saying "whatever happens is God's will."

Since sweeping economic sanctions were imposed in May and June, trade between Haiti and the rest of the world has ground to a halt. On Saturday, the country's last commercial air links were cut when Air France fell in line with the air embargo.

Two of three Central American nations Monday openly backed the U.N. Security Council decision allowing a U.S. invasion of Haiti, but said sanctions should be given more time to work.

"We support the United Nations' decision, although I think we must continue exhausting the search for a peaceful solution to Haiti's crisis," Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueres told reporters.

He said that if those efforts fail to force Haiti's military rulers into resigning and allowing ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return to power, an invasion would be necessary.

"If there is no other path, or no way out, we will support the U.N. resolution," Mr. Figueres said.

In Honduras, Foreign Minister Ernesto Paz said the government was considering whether or not to offer troops to either an invasion force or a multinational peacekeeping force that would be deployed once Haiti's army chiefs leave.

The attackers were found by troops after the attack. It was the first time the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas had penetrated the large base in Jaffna, 320 kilometres north of the Sri Lanka capital Colombo.

The base is the military's biggest installation in the Jaffna peninsula and a sizable number of soldiers and airmen are based there.

There were no reported injuries at the base in Indian Head, Maryland, which houses navy weapons and ammunition.

The blast, which occurred about 10:45 p.m. EDT (0245 GMT Tuesday), was contained in a single building, the base spokeswoman, Jennifer McGraw, said. Area firefighters offered their services, but base personnel were able to cope by themselves.

"We have officers from the local fire department to come in and help and we do not need it," Ms. McGraw said. A navy spokesman at the Pentagon said the explosion involved conventional "cartridge-activated devices" such as those that propel a pilot's ejection seat from a navy aircraft.

"We're not talking large explosive shells here," Navy Commander Stephen Pietropoli said by telephone. He said the aftermath of the blast was "more a question of a smoulder than a real fire."

The Sheriff's Department of Charles County, where the weapons centre is located, said there had been no need to evacuate anyone and that no injuries were reported.

As a fallback device, a controversial requirement that businesses pay half their workers' insurance costs could go into effect in the year 2002.

Sen. Mitchell has been a solid ally of President Bill Clinton's goal of universal coverage, but he had to opt for a more gradual, more market-oriented approach to try to win over more conservative members of his Democratic Party.

Sen. Mitchell's announcement represents the final scene in the long prelude to the health care debate. Next week, the House and the Senate are finally set to start debate on some of the most complex and ambitious social reforms of the century.

With that in mind, both sides stepped up their campaigns.

For instance, Tipper Gore planned to serve Danish pasty at sunrise Tuesday at the vice president's residence to activists from the cross-country bus tour meant to drum up grass-roots support for health care reform.

And first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton was to attend a noon rally at Capitol Hill with like-minded lawmakers pushing for reforms that would insure all Americans.

But the Republicans also geared up, mounting attacks on bills that argue will engorge the deficit, wipe out jobs and limit Americans' choices about their medical care.

"You're talking about the lives and deaths of 265 million Americans. You're talking about 14 per cent of the economy. You're talking about doctors and hospitals and research and in the capital of the United States this bill is being decided on the most narrowly partisan of reasons," House Republican Whip Newt Gingrich of Georgia said at a televised forum sponsored Monday night by the Republican National Committee and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

N. Korea warns South not to meddle in U.S. talks on nuclear dispute

TOKYO (R) — A North Korean delegation left Tuesday for Geneva to resume talks with U.S. envoys on the nuclear dispute, with Pyongyang warning bitter rival South Korea not to meddle at this "decisive" stage of the dialogue.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored in Tokyo, announced the departure of the diplomatic team, headed by Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-Ju.

The two sides are due to meet Friday for the first time since July 8, when the dialogue was interrupted following the death of North Korean President Kim Il-Sung.

The talks are aimed at resolving the confrontation over Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons programme. The secretive North denies it has any military nuclear ambitions but has so far refused U.N. inspectors full access to its nuclear sites.

As Mr. Kang flew out, the official daily Rodong Sinmun urged joint efforts to ensure progress in the bilateral talks based on the principles of mutual trust and equality.

As reported by KCNA, the Communist Party organ gave a clear warning to the South Korean authorities not to interfere.

"Declaring that it is a consistent position of the government of the Democratic People's Republic of (North) Korea (DPRK) to resolve the nuclear issue peacefully through dialogue and negotiation, the analyst says:

"If a third party's unreasonable demand were raised at the talks, it would result in laying an artificial hurdle in the solution of the nuclear issue."

Rodong Sinmun was echoing a headline statement issued last week by the North Korean Foreign Ministry.

A ministry spokesman said on July 25: "It is clear that if the improvement of North-South relations is set as a precondition for the improvement of the DPRK-U.S. relations at the DPRK-U.S. talks for the solution to the nuclear issue, a fatal roadblock would be erected in the way of the solution to the nuclear issue."

North Korea, which dismisses the Seoul government as a U.S. puppet, has always sought to deal directly with Washington, the guarantor of South Korean security.

Just as consistently Seoul has insisted that improvement of North Korean-U.S. relations must go hand in hand with better North-South ties.

Rodong Sinmun said Tuesday that a fundamental solution to the nuclear issue was unthinkable without trust between North Korea and the United States.

"The nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula is, both nominally and virtually, a matter of the DPRK-U.S. relations and a bilateral issue of political nature which must be solved through DPRK-U.S. dialogue," it said.

The newspaper said Pyongyang stood behind its earlier proposal for a package solution to the nuclear issue.

Such a package would include an agreement to freeze operation of its experimental graphite atomic reactor and reprocessing plant, capable

of producing weapons-grade plutonium.

In exchange, Washington would provide the North with a safer light water reactor.

It would also extend full U.S. recognition to the Stalinist state, with which Washington and Seoul are still technically at war more than 40 years after the 1950-53 Korean conflict.

N. Korea 'ready for summit' with South

SEOUL (AFP) — Kim Il-Sung's successors still want a summit with South Korea, CNN reported from Pyongyang Tuesday, but analysts here said stinging insults carried by the North's official media made an early meeting unlikely.

In the telecast, Cable News Network correspondent Mike Chinoy — the first Western journalist to enter North Korea since Kim Il-Sung died July 8 — said officials had told him "they want talks with South Korea."

The ill will across the demilitarised zone has raised serious doubts about the prospect for any North-South summit, but North Korean officials tell CNN they want talks with South Korea, that Pyongyang's position now is the same as when Kim Il-Sung was alive.

Mr. Chinoy said in the broadcast monitored here.

The summit — between 82-year-old Stalinist Kim Il-Sung and his southern counterpart dissident-turned-President Kim Young-Sam — was to have taken place in Pyongyang on July 25-27, less than three weeks before Kim Il-Sung's death.

feelings instead of their party loyalties, they would find the Republican alternatives "widely acceptable."

Senator Bob Packwood of Oregon, appearing on the same programme, said the Democrats feared bipartisanship.

Spirit of Woodstock flagging 25 years later

NEW YORK (AFP) — The spirit of Woodstock is flagging 25 years after the legendary rock concert that symbolised the Love Generation. One anniversary event has been cancelled and another is struggling for a bigger audience. Promoters scrapped plans Monday for a commemorative concert scheduled to be held Aug. 13-14 on the Bethel, New York farm where the original Woodstock drew 400,000 rain-resistant fans.

They had hoped to attract 50,000 people paying nearly \$95 for two days of music by Woodstock veterans such as Richie Havens, Melanie, Sha Na Na and Canned Heat. But only 1,650 tickets were sold. "We had every reason to believe that there was substantial consumer interest in Bethel '94," said Harry Rhulen of the promoters Shea Entertainment.

"However, the apparent interest did not materialise to support a multi-million dollar expenditure," he said. Ticket holders will be refunded and Rhulen, an insurance executive, says he stands to lose \$2 million. Sales were also slower than expected for the larger Woodstock '94 concert being staged the same weekend in Saugerties, New York, by the promoters of the original event and PolyGram Diversified Entertainment. Some 250,000 tickets were available at \$135 apiece, but fewer than 150,000 had been snapped up by Monday when sales were supposed to have been cut off, a PolyGram spokesman said. Sales have been extended for at least another 10 days and fans no longer have to buy in blocks of four with one parking pass. They can now buy two tickets with a parking pass.

Driver, 94, tries going against the flow

WELLINGTON (R) — A 94-year-old woman drove six kilometres down the wrong side of one of New Zealand's busiest highways Tuesday without realising anything was amiss, police said. The woman headed south in pouring rain on the busy north-bound carriageway of the Wellington Motorway, oblivious to the cars swerving out of her way. "An ambulance heading north saw her weaving towards them. They stopped and put on their emergency lights and, fortunately for them, she stopped also," a police spokesman said.

U.K. bids to build toilet on roof of the world

LONDON (R) — A British firm hopes to build a toilet on the roof of the world as the slopes of Mount Everest are now so packed with climbers who have nowhere to go. "There is no drainage up there. Human waste stays around for a long time. That leads to infection, including dysentery," Charles Clarke, medical adviser to the British Mountaineering Council, told The Guardian newspaper. Thousands use the Nepalese and Tibetan base camps every year, posing hygiene problems for authorities who are coming to Britain later this month for talks on how to improve the environment. That is when Philip Tolan, a toilet manufacturer from the Scottish city of Glasgow, hopes to pitch for business. "It may seem like quite a challenge but we have products which would be ideal for such a difficult location," he told the paper.

California scraps wild west laws

SACRAMENTO, California (AFP) — Lawmakers in California have done away with some of the vestiges of the old west by scrapping provisions from its books restricting where "Wanted: Dead or Alive" posters can be hung and the movement of donkeys and horses. The provisions, that date back to 1872 when California was part of the old west instead of the left coast, were scrapped from the state code last week in a bid to address concerns by constituents that laws were too "complicated," officials said. Under the new streamlined code, winners of the famed pistol duels will no longer be required to compensate the loser's spouse. The changes, which take effect on Jan. 1, also do away with restrictions for displaying "Wanted: Dead or Alive" posters and for allowing donkeys, horses and bulls to roam wild.

3 rebels, 1 airman killed in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (R) — At least three Tamil rebels and one airman were killed and a helicopter set ablaze in a rebel attack on a major military airport in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna peninsula early Tuesday, military sources said.

Two other rebels were seriously wounded and left behind by the small rebel group after the hour-long fight at Pallaly Airport in the Tamil-rebel controlled peninsula, the sources said. The wounded rebels were taken to a military hospital.

Two airmen were also wounded. The sources said the control tower at the airport was secure and in the hands of government forces.

The sources said rebel weapons and radios used by the attackers were found by troops after the attack.

It was the first time the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas had penetrated the large base in Jaffna, 320 kilometres north of the Sri Lanka capital Colombo.

The base is the military's biggest installation in the Jaffna peninsula and a sizable number of soldiers and airmen are based there.

There were no reported injuries at the base in Indian Head, Maryland, which houses navy weapons and ammunition.

Blast rocks U.S. Navy ordnance centre

WASHINGTON (R) — An explosion rocked the headquarters of the U.S. naval ordnance centre 40 kilometres south of Washington on the Potomac River late Monday night, officials said.

There were no reported injuries at the base in Indian Head, Maryland, which houses navy weapons and ammunition.

The blast, which occurred about 10:45 p.m. EDT (0245 GMT Tuesday), was contained in a single building, the base spokeswoman, Jennifer McGraw, said. Area firefighters offered their services, but base personnel were able to cope by themselves.

"We have officers from the local fire department to come in and help and we do not need it," Ms. McGraw said. A navy spokesman at the Pentagon said the explosion involved conventional "cartridge-activated devices" such as those that propel a pilot's ejection seat from a navy aircraft.

"We're not talking large explosive shells here," Navy Commander Stephen Pietropoli said by telephone. He said the aftermath of the blast was "more a question of a smoulder than a real fire."

The Sheriff's Department of Charles County, where the weapons centre is located, said there had been no need to evacuate anyone and that no injuries were reported.

As a fallback device, a controversial requirement that businesses pay half their workers' insurance costs could go into effect in the year 2002.

AIDS epidemic threatening 'Asian promise'

MANILA (R) — The AIDS epidemic is threatening growth and progress in booming Asia, where 30 per cent of world HIV cases are projected to be found by 2000, speakers at an Asian Development Bank (ADB)-sponsored meeting said Tuesday.

They said a large commercial sex industry and intravenous drug use were hastening the spread of the disease in the region, known as the world's engine of growth.

Although the severity of the threat of AIDS varies from country to country, the disease is bound to have serious economic and social costs, they said.

"The HIV epidemic is the enemy of 'Asian promise'," ADB Vice-President Peter Sullivan said at the start of a meeting of the ADB and the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) on the economic implications of HIV/AIDS.

"It threatens much of the progress that has been made over the past two decades and endangers economic growth in countries that have introduced growth-enhancing, economy-wide reforms only recently," he said.

In Asia, the first cases of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) were reported only in the mid-1980s but by 1991 over one million cases of infection with the AIDS-causing human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) were estimated to have already occurred, ADB economist Myo Thant said in a paper.

He said that, while there was wide disparity between estimates and actual numbers, a clear trend showed the epidemic was moving steadily towards developing countries, particularly those in Asia.

Families quiet on Presley-Jackson marriage

LOS ANGELES (R) — The family of Michael Jackson remained silent Tuesday on the announcement by the only daughter of Elvis Presley that she and the pop superstar had married in a secret ceremony 11 weeks ago.

It was not formally announced until now for several reasons, foremost being that we are both very private people living in the glare of the public media. We both wanted a private marriage ceremony without the distraction of a media circus.

"I am very much in love with Michael. I dedicate my life to being his wife. I understand and support him, we both look forward to raising a family and living happy, healthy life together."

"We hope our friends and fans will understand and respect our privacy."

The wedding unites two of the richest people in show business.

Lisa Marie's assets from her father's will are estimated to be \$150 million, while her new husband is believed to be worth in excess of \$250 million.

The couple had their first date on Feb. 2 when they went to Las Vegas together to watch a show by the 60's groups The Temptations and the Fifth Dimension, according to news reports.

Families quiet on Presley-Jackson marriage

At the time, Lisa Marie was estranged from her husband, musician Danny Keough, with whom she has two children. The couple reportedly got a "quickie" divorce in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic on May 6.

Dominican Judge Hugo Alvarez Perez, who announced last month that he had officiated at the marriage of Jackson and Lisa Marie, said they were married in a brief ceremony, complete with a wedding kiss and gold rings.

Judge Alvarez Perez' announcement in mid-July was initially greeted with skepticism by the world's press.

"It was a normal ceremony, more or less lasting 12 minutes," the judge told WSVN-TV in the Miami suburb of Hialeah Monday. "He was a little nervous," the judge said, referring to Jackson, whom he said presented Presley with a "very nice ring."

The judge said the newlyweds exchanged "a little kiss" before being whisked away by bodyguards. Judge Alvarez Perez was in Miami for personal business and to tape a programme.

Judge Alvarez Perez said previously that the couple signed affidavits stating that they were single and free to marry.

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Families quiet on Presley-Jackson marriage

Police have launched an investigation to see if Jackson should be tried on criminal sexual molestation charges. Evidence was presented to two grand juries in Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties where the singer maintains homes where the boy alleged the sex acts took place.

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At the time, Lisa Marie was estranged from her husband, musician Danny Keough, with whom she has two children. The couple reportedly got a "quickie" divorce in Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic on May 6.

Dominican Judge Hugo Alvarez Perez, who announced last month that he had officiated at the marriage of Jackson and Lisa Marie, said they were married in a brief ceremony, complete with a wedding kiss and gold rings.

Judge Alvarez Perez' announcement in mid-July was initially greeted with skepticism by the world's press.

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Spirit of Woodstock flagging 25 years later

NEW YORK (AFP) — The spirit of Woodstock is flagging 25 years after the legendary rock concert that helped define the 1960s. One anniversary event, a "Woodstock 25" concert, has been cancelled and promoters are struggling to attract a new generation of fans. Promoters are planning a "Woodstock 25" concert on the site of the original festival, but it is expected to be a far less successful event. The original Woodstock festival, held in 1969, drew 400,000 people to a farm in Bethel, New York. It was a defining moment in the history of rock music, and it has since become a symbol of the 1960s. However, the spirit of Woodstock is flagging 25 years later. One anniversary event, a "Woodstock 25" concert, has been cancelled and promoters are struggling to attract a new generation of fans. Promoters are planning a "Woodstock 25" concert on the site of the original festival, but it is expected to be a far less successful event. The original Woodstock festival, held in 1969, drew 400,000 people to a farm in Bethel, New York. It was a defining moment in the history of rock music, and it has since become a symbol of the 1960s.



An exhausted Rwandan refugee rests on the road near the northwestern Rwandan town of Ruhengeri as thousands of Rwandan refugees return home. The Red Cross has distributed 50 tonnes of food to several thousands of Rwandan refugees from Zaire to Ruhengeri (AFP photo)

Cross has distributed 50 tonnes of food to several thousands of Rwandan refugees from Zaire to Ruhengeri (AFP photo)

Abiola trial adjourned on eve of petroleum strike

LAGOS (Agencies) — The treason trial of Nigerian opposition leader Moshood Abiola, who has declared himself elected head of state, was adjourned Tuesday for a day after the defence challenged the court's jurisdiction, court sources said. Mr. Abiola heads a campaign against military rule, which is backed by pro-democracy activities and petroleum industry workers who have been on strike for a month, doing serious damage to the economy of oil-rich Nigeria.

Court sources said the adjournment would enable the prosecution to respond to a claim that the high court in the capital Abuja lacked the competence to try Mr. Abiola because his offence was allegedly committed in Lagos. Mr. Abiola was arrested days after making a public appearance to declare himself president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces on June 11, the eve of the first anniversary of elections he is believed to have won, before the junta annulled the outcome of the poll.

Armed riot police cordoned off the area around the courtroom and patrolled all roads leading into Abuja as the tycoon was produced in court, witnesses said, the day before a general strike announced by the main labour federation. When the trial began last Thursday, violent demonstrations took place around the court premises. Witnesses said police shot three people dead. The police denied killing anybody but said they had arrested about 120 protesters.

The adjournment came amid speculation that the regime of General Sani Abacha might bow to pressure from the trade unions and the pro-democracy movement to free the politician. Other soldiers will camp out in the Amahoro Sports Stadium in downtown Kigali, where Canadian troops are also based.

U.K. soldiers arrive in Rwanda

KIGALI (R) — British soldiers flew into Rwanda's mortar-scarred airport Tuesday, starting an aid mission that will bring 600 to the central African country wrecked by civil war, massacres and one of the worst refugee crises in modern times. Operation Gabriel, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Warmby, is the largest deployment of British troops in Africa since they oversaw Zimbabwe's first multiracial elections 14 years ago. "There will be about five Hercules (C-130 aircraft) coming in today," Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Phil Hamblin said. An advance party of eight Royal Air Force airmen jogged down the loading ramp of a C-130 plane just after dawn and were met by U.S. soldiers already deployed at the runway.

British medical staff in the northwestern town of Ruhengeri will treat refugees falling sick on the road home from hellish camps in eastern Zaire where thousands are dying of disease. In a three-month blood-bath, Hutu extremists butchered an estimated 500,000 Tutsis and Hutus who back opposition parties. Some 2.7 million Hutus then fled the country to escape advancing guerrillas from the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF). British engineers will be based in the northern town of Byumba to help rebuild bridges and repair roads damaged during the fighting which ended with a victory by the RPF last month.

Other soldiers will camp out in the Amahoro Sports Stadium in downtown Kigali, where Canadian troops are also based. The British, who will take up to two weeks to complete their arrival, join troops from the United States, Canada, Australia and a handful of African countries in the humanitarian mission. As with other Western deployments, the British forces are moving into Rwanda in a trickle that contradicts government promises to act fast to stem the tide of refugee deaths. Col. Warmby said the mission aimed to create a climate of calm to entice refugees back from the camps in Zaire and to help rebuild some of the war-damaged infrastructure. Teams will manage vehicle mechanics, road maintenance, rebuild bridges blown up during the fighting, clear unexploded ordnance littered around the country from fighting and send out medical staff to care for homecoming refugees.

Col. Warmby said the soldiers, serving under the U.N. flag, would carry weapons sufficient only for self-protection. The British mission was announced by the government last week after Baroness Lynda Chalker, the overseas development minister, visited eastern Zaire where refugees are dying of disease in their hundreds each day. But it was apparently delayed because of problems in transporting British forces, hit by recent defence cuts, and their equipment to the remote African nation. A total of 200 U.S. troops are expected in the capital by the end of the week. Some 600 Canadians and 300 Australians are also on their way. The mission to repatriate refugees is becoming more complicated by the hour. Refugees returning from cholera and dysentery-plagued camps in Zaire could spawn a health disaster in Rwanda, doctors said. Refugees vomit and, with diarrhoea running down their legs, cluster at a tent clinic in a camp at Kibumba in eastern Zaire. "Dysentery is growing. Some of these people we think have a combination of cholera and dysentery," said Nurse Karin Vandesbroek in the compound filled with sick. In the Zaire border town of Goma, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, said she would tell Rwanda's more than two million refugees to go home only when the new government showed it could deliver on promises to protect them.

In southwestern Rwanda, French forces which deployed with 2,500 troops in Operation Turquoise in June to patrol a "safe haven" could be preparing to leave by Aug. 22. France is apparently hesitating on this since the U.N., which has been pleading for equipment and aircraft to help deploy African troops who agreed to go to Rwanda two months ago, wants Turquoise forces to stay longer. Although tens of thousands of Hutu refugees have begun returning, the majority are staying behind in Zairean camps. Some are clearly terrified of being under RPF rule. Many others are linked with the massacres of 500,000 Tutsis and opposition Hutus carried out by Hutu supporters of then-President Juvenal Habyarimana after he was assassinated on April 6 along with the president of neighbouring Burundi. Both presidents were Hutus. Rwanda's new Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu Tuesday shrugged off a possible threat by troops from the former Rwandan army to oust his government. "They have fought, and they have lost. Now they can start a guerrilla (war), but the question is whether they have a clear objective. Those who only fight for personal or regional interests... cannot succeed," Mr. Twagiramungu told Belgian Radio from Kigali. Thousands of troops loyal to the government of assassinated President Juvenal Habyarimana are massed in neighbouring Zaire. "We do not want to reopen another chapter of massacres," Mr. Twagiramungu said, urging all Rwandans to try and reconcile their differences. Mr. Twagiramungu, a Hutu moderate in the new government formed by the victorious Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) two weeks ago, dismissed claims he was a puppet of the RPF. "The RPF has accepted me as the prime minister, therefore I believe that I am the prime minister of all Rwandans, not only of the RPF," he said. "I am not an alibi, a pawn or a puppet," he added. Meanwhile, representatives of 44 donor nations gathered in Geneva Tuesday to discuss a U.N. appeal for almost half a billion dollars in emergency aid to Rwanda. Peter Hansen, U.N. Assistance Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, opening the day-long meeting, described a "hellish situation" in Rwanda, but said it "is not too late to speak of prevention."

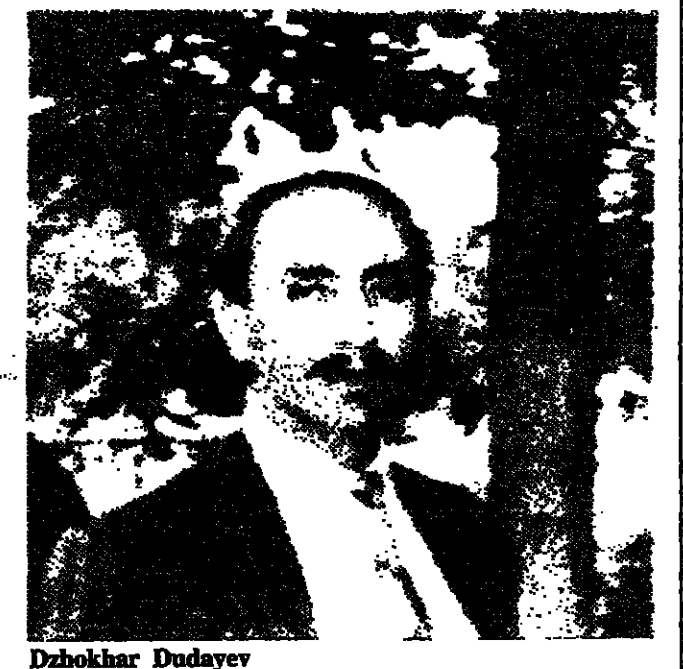
U.S. troops unload food from a Canadian plane as a U.N. chopper lands at Kigali Airport (AFP photo)

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Rebels claim Chechen leader ousted

MOSCOW (AFP) — Rebels in the breakaway Russian Republic of Chechnya announced Tuesday that they had ousted President Dzhokhar Dudayev and had assumed "all authority" in the republic, ITAR-TASS news agency reported. The announcement was contained in a decree issued by an opposition Provisional Council which led armed opposition to Mr. Dudayev in recent weeks and which last month asked Moscow to recognise it as the authority in Chechnya. "In connection with the decision at the congress of Chechen people, the provisional council assumes all state power," the decree, delivered to ITAR-TASS in Moscow, stated. The Provisional Council, led by Umar Avturkhanov, a former local administrator, said it had "deposed" Dudayev from his duties and accused the Chechen president of usurping power in the country. The council said it would hold legislative and local elections in May or June next year, but the statement reported by ITAR-TASS made no mention of presidential elections. The announcement came less than a week after four Chechens seized a busload of hostages in southern Russia in an incident that ended in five deaths and some 15 persons wounded. Mr. Dudayev, a former



Dzhokhar Dudayev

The Provisional Council said it would immediately set up a government of "national renaissance" and asserted that any resident of the Caucasus mountain republic who continued to back Mr. Dudayev was "committing a crime against the Chechen people." "All decrees directed against the people, all orders and resolutions and other documents adopted by the Dudayev regime are declared invalid and will not be carried out," the decree stated, according to ITAR-TASS. Mr. Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force bomber pilot, became Chechnya's first democratically-elected president in October 1991, at which time he also unilaterally declared Chechnya's independence from Russia. No country or government ever recognised the move and Chechnya has since held a reputation for lawlessness and as an unchecked gateway for smuggling between Russia and neighbouring countries. The decree issued by the Provisional Council stated it went into effect immediately.

Major in Vilnius for talks with Baltic leaders

VILNIUS (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major arrived here Tuesday to meet with his Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian counterparts for talks expected to focus on trade and Baltic-Russian relations. "This visit has economic meaning for us but also political meaning," said Vilnius Kavaliauskas, spokesman for Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius. Mr. Major was expected to discuss the politically-sensitive subject of Russian troop withdrawals from the former Soviet Baltic republics, Mr. Kavaliauskas said. "Our neighbours need support on the withdrawal of troops," he said. Mr. Major was due to hold a news conference starting 2:00 p.m. (11:00 GMT). Britain is the biggest investor in Lithuania and Mr. Slezevicius hoped Mr. Major's visit will encourage British firms to participate in several substantial projects including the conversion of military factories into civilian plants, Mr. Kavaliauskas said. During his one-day visit to the Lithuanian capital, Mr. Major was also scheduled to meet with Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas and the prime minister of Estonia and Latvia, Mart Laar and Valdis Birkavs, respectively. The last Russian troops left Lithuania last year and Moscow has pledged to withdraw its soldiers from Estonia and Latvia by Aug. 31. Mr. Kavaliauskas compared Mr. Major's visit to U.S. President Bill Clinton's trip to Latvia last month, saying it would give impetus to the Baltic's drive for integration with the West. "We are going to the European and to the world markets together with our neighbours," he said. He said the visit by the British prime minister also bolstered pressure on Moscow to stand by its agreements to remove the last of the Russian troops stationed in the Baltics by the Soviet Union. Referring to the tense negotiations that preceded the withdrawal of Russian troops from Lithuania last year, Mr. Kavaliauskas said the troops "will probably withdraw (from Estonia and Latvia) on time." "But who knows? We were not sure until the last day whether there would be a withdrawal or not. There could be a revolt of some troops or units," he said. Mr. Kavaliauskas said Lithuania hoped for British support for large-scale projects such as modernising sea ports and airports.

Indian opposition lawmakers quit parliamentary committees in protest

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Opposition lawmakers Tuesday resigned from all parliamentary committees and announced a three-week boycott of parliament, outraged by the government's refusal to accept blame for India's biggest financial scandal. Cutting across all divisions among the opposition, the parties said their MPs would not return to parliament for the rest of the month-long monsoon session, which began on July 25. An angry walkout from both houses of parliament followed the announcement. Opposition MPs ignored placatory gestures from the government and the speaker's appeals for reconciliation. The protest climaxed four days of turmoil sparked by a government report rebutting the findings of a bipartisan parliamentary committee which blamed administrative lapses for the \$1.3-billion bank scam. Leaders of the rightwing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party), the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party) and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) said their MPs were quitting all legislative committees. India's bicameral parliament has an array of committees to deal with various aspects of legislative business and oversee government functioning. "Our next step will be to go to the people," Janata Dal leader Sharad Yadav said in the Lok Sabha, or lower house, seemingly holding out an opposition threat to resign en masse from parliament itself. Atal Behari Vajpayee, BJP leader, voiced regret that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) Party government had done nothing to break the deadlock over the report on the scandal that the opposition wants scrapped. He said the three-year-old government was faced with a "crisis of credibility" by questioning the committee's findings in its "Action Taken Report" on the scam unveiled on July 26. Two government ministers — Health Minister B. Shankaranand and Minister of State for Rural Development Rameshwar Thakur — were criticised by the legislative panel for alleged wrongdoing in the scam which surfaced in 1992. The two ministers held different portfolios at the time. Finance Minister Manmohan Singh was also upbraided by the panel for failing to act and stem the fraud, but cast no doubt on his personal integrity. The government described the findings as "unwarranted" and "unfair," and rejected demands that the ministers be punished. It said the scam — allegedly carried out by a nexus of bankers and brokers who siphoned off public funds in fraudulent securities deals to play the stock market — was the result of a systems failure rather than administrative lapse. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vidya Charan Shukla Tuesday pleaded the government's case, saying it had no intention to denigrate the parliamentary panel and appealing to opposition leaders to think "coolly." He rejected demands that the Action Taken Report be withdrawn in its entirety, and urged the opposition to treat it merely as an interim and not a final document detailing government response to the scam. Until a final document more palatable to the opposition is ready to be put to parliament, the legislature should carry on its business, Mr. Shukla said. "No, no, no," opposition members chanted in response before trooping out. The lower house speaker, Shriyaji Patil, appealed for a government-opposition dialogue to resolve the issue.

As with other Western deployments, the British forces are moving into Rwanda in a trickle that contradicts government promises to act fast to stem the tide of refugee deaths. Col. Warmby said the mission aimed to create a climate of calm to entice refugees back from the camps in Zaire and to help rebuild some of the war-damaged infrastructure. Teams will manage vehicle mechanics, road maintenance, rebuild bridges blown up during the fighting, clear unexploded ordnance littered around the country from fighting and send out medical staff to care for homecoming refugees.

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Berlusconi criticised as parliament debate looms

ROME (R) — Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi — now only a single point ahead of Italy's neo-fascist leader in the latest popularity poll — came under yet more attack from his allies Tuesday. One said he had too many business interests to be prime minister, the other accused him of riding roughshod over the government's smaller supporters. Further criticism seems bound to come when the media tycoon answers questions in parliament over the political muddles dogging his coalition. A series of setbacks over the past month has tarnished Mr. Berlusconi's golden image and wiped the broad smile from his perennially sun-tanned face. Doubts have been raised about the stability of his right-wing tripartite coalition and financial markets have taken fright at the prospect of a possible return to the bad old days of weak, short-lived governments. Tuesday's parliamentary appearance is likely to focus on Mr. Berlusconi's open fight with graft-busting magistrates and his plan to distance himself from his business empire. The debate, at 8 p.m. (18:00 GMT), may well see his main partner, the federalist Northern League, openly criticise him again, political analysts believe. "Berlusconi should not be prime minister," League leader Umberto Bossi was quoted as saying in Tuesday's Corriere Della Sera newspaper. "How can a man with so much economic power be at the head of a government?" However, Mr. Bossi restated his party's commitment to stable government and willingness to work with Mr. Berlusconi. Caught up in a row over his handling of a corruption scandal that led to the arrest of his brother Paolo, Silvio Berlusconi failed to win political backing for his plan to put a wall between himself and his \$7 billion a year Fininvest empire. Parliament will not vote at the end of the debate, but it will provide insight into the level of dissent within his own coalition and will supply material for political pundits who have been speculating on his government's durability. Mr. Berlusconi may have felt further discomfit on Tuesday from the results of an opinion poll that showed his rating was slipping in favour of neo-fascist National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini. The poll, by the SWG polling institute for Famiglia Cristiana magazine, said only 21.4 per cent of Italians would vote for Mr. Berlusconi were it possible to directly elect the prime minister. In February, 33.4 per cent said they would do so. The rating of Fini, who has cultivated his image as a mediator in the recent coalition spats, shot up to 20.3 per cent from 8.7 per cent. Mr. Berlusconi nearly brought his government down last month with a decree that let scores of corruption suspects leave jail. Only five days after it was introduced, the League forced Mr. Berlusconi into a humiliating retreat — his first climbdown since entering politics at the start of the year. A few days later, Mr. Berlusconi was deeply embarrassed when graft-busters launched a probe that not only touched Fininvest, but also led to the arrest of Paolo Berlusconi on suspicion of bankrolling alleged bribes paid by the group. In another sign of dissent within the coalition, the leader of the tiny Christian Democratic Centre (CCD) party called Tuesday for more coordination in the disparate majority. CCD leader Pierferdinando Casini pressed home demands for a meeting of all the leaders of parties in Mr. Berlusconi's coalition that included his party, which has two ministers. "Let me remind Berlusconi of the thing: The parliamentary majority is not run on a pact between the leaders of the three largest parties," he told Il Messaggero newspaper.

As with other Western deployments, the British forces are moving into Rwanda in a trickle that contradicts government promises to act fast to stem the tide of refugee deaths. Col. Warmby said the mission aimed to create a climate of calm to entice refugees back from the camps in Zaire and to help rebuild some of the war-damaged infrastructure. Teams will manage vehicle mechanics, road maintenance, rebuild bridges blown up during the fighting, clear unexploded ordnance littered around the country from fighting and send out medical staff to care for homecoming refugees.

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Pacific nations move to protect forests, fisheries

BRISBANE, Australia (AFP) — South Pacific island nations made it plain Tuesday they would no longer tolerate the "highly destructive" exploitation of its limited resources. In a 10-page communique at the conclusion of the two-day, 15-nation South Pacific Forum, heads of governments expressed concern "at the way in which forests throughout the region and the world are being harvested in a highly destructive manner." During Tuesday's forum, the prime ministers of timber-producing nations Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu held a separate meeting. The communique "warmly welcomed" their subsequent agreement and said it would result in work towards a common code of conduct "governing logging of indigenous forests, to which companies operating in their countries will have to adhere." Monitoring of logging and exports will be urgently increased and senior officials are to meet within the next two months to begin implementing the decisions. On Monday, Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating and Solomon's Prime Minister Francis Billy Hilili announced the suspension of a logging licence held by Malaysian company Kumpalan Emas Group operating in the Solomons because it had "consistently breached the conditions of its licence by carrying out illegal forestry practices." The mostly-Asian logging companies have voracious appetites for logs in the Solomons, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. Mr. Keating said the forum showed a political commitment to use resources in a sustainable way. The forum communique said countries agree that a multilateral approach on fishing will be strengthened to promote the sustainable exploitation of fish stocks within the Pacific. The forum will define sustainable catch levels for all fisheries. The South Pacific tuna fishery contains 50 per cent of the world's canned tuna and supplies 90 per cent of Japan's tuna needs. The South Pacific Forum warned France Tuesday that a resumption of nuclear tests in the Pacific would be a major setback to the current positive trend in the group's relations with Paris. "If France were to cease testing permanently, this would contribute significantly to improving further relations between France and the forum countries," it said in a communique issued at the close of its 25th meeting here. France has staged a long series of nuclear tests at Mururoa atoll but in April 1992 declared a moratorium on testing in the South Pacific which is still in place. "Any resumption of testing would be a major setback to the current positive trend in relations between France and the region," the 15-member grouping said. A report at the weekend that there was a division in France's leadership over resumption of tests caused a considerable stir in New Zealand. On New Caledonia, the commune noted that in the French territory "real economic and social rebalancing was still some distance away." The forum "affirmed its support for continuing contacts with the French territories as a positive contribution towards the Matignon process." The 1988 Matignon Accords provide for a referendum in 1998 on independence of the French Territory. The commune "noted in particular with pleasure" that the Kanak Training Fund was now operating successfully with a number of fellowships granted. The forum secretariat's relations with France and its territories "were on a good footing" the document said. A delegation from the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) met over dinner Monday with forum leaders and delegation members. FLNKS spokesman Rock Wamytan said.

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The law is above all

THERE IS no denial that opposition to government policies is a legitimate and constitutional right. The essence of democracy is that it condones pluralism and guarantees those who do not agree with the policies and programmes of the government the right to protest those policies and programmes through all lawful means.

The laws of the land, written in accordance with the Constitution, state that certain institutions, especially the Monarchy and the Armed Forces, should not be discussed in any negative way. They also forbid the use of places of worship as pulpits for political campaigning. The Monarchy and the Armed Forces are guarantors of the Constitution and the security of the country. The two should always be kept out of the rhetoric of politicians or the press and that is clearly expressed in the Press and Publication Law passed only last year.

These facts are very clear to the opposition. It is, therefore, mind-boggling to see some opposition elements resorting to these illegal means in their opposition to the peace process. What is more puzzling is the involvement of some deputies who are well-aware of the Constitution, the different laws and the principles of the National Charter. The deputies should know very well that the forum for opposing the government is under the dome of the House of Parliament and not in the streets or the mosques.

The deputies and other opposition figures should also realise that the people of Jordan are fully knowledgeable of the principles that guide Jordan's path. The people of Jordan, politicised as they are, are fully conversant with the political and economic dangers and challenges that the country faces. These are the 1990s, not the 1960s. Rhetoric and slogans of the 1960s are long dead and abandoned. They do not correspond with the new realities with which the Kingdom and the people have to deal. Once opposition realises all of that, it must, sooner than later, reposition itself in a manner that will serve Jordan, the Jordanian people and the Arab cause in general by abiding by the law and respecting the Constitution. The opportunity is there and missing it is a sin.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Tuesday said national unity at this juncture was of paramount importance for Jordan as it strives to regain usurped Arab rights. Mohammad Qudab said that Jordanians of different origins have been living together since the start of occupation of Palestine and have been enjoying security and stability that have been envied by Arabs around them. Therefore, they have all the reasons to remain united and to stop any attempt designed to tamper with national unity, he said. The Palestinians and the Jordanians have shared their living, lived through sufferings and hardships and are bound to have the same destiny together, said Mr. Qudab. It is therefore incumbent on all citizens to fight against voices trying to damage the relationship between the two peoples and distort the image of unity, he said. Referring to the Washington Declaration, he said that article three has re-emphasised Islamic Hashemite sovereignty over the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, something which should be considered as a major gain for the nation, contributing towards further bolstering national unity. He said that the Hashemites have succeeded in securing custody over the holy sites in the face of Israel's intransigence, thus realising a great achievement for the Arab and Islamic Nation.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour expressed the view that the U.S.-Western alliance would not launch a large scale military operation against Iran in retaliation for the spate of bombing incidents in Europe and the U.S., allegedly committed by Iranian agents. Saleh Qallab said any such adventure would be costly and could trigger a large scale war in the region. The writer expressed the view that action against Iran would take the form of a siege on Iranian ports on the one hand and allowing Israel to launch aggression on selected Iranian targets on the other. There is much talk in the Western media about possible air strikes and other hostile action against Iranian-backed Hizbollah bases, and this, he said, is carried out routinely by the Israelis. But escalation of the present level of attacks could trigger a wide-scale war in the Middle East that would be detrimental to the peace process, said the writer. On the whole, any large scale military activity on the part of the West, added the writer, would not be an easy task and could back-fire in a most serious form and consequence.

Washington Watch

The search for foreign policy success

By Dr. James Zogby

THE CEREMONIES surrounding the Jordanian-Israeli signing of the Washington Declaration last week provided a welcome boost to U.S. President Bill Clinton, one that should not be underestimated.

Beleaguered by foreign critics on four continents (Haiti, Bosnia, Korea and Rwanda), the president needed an opportunity to show off a success in at least one area of foreign policy. The Washington signing provided two days of leading foreign policy stories that were not critical of President Clinton, and pictures of him demonstrating U.S. leadership replaced photos of the suffering in Rwanda and Haiti.

Those same two days silenced his critics. The combination of Unresolved (and, some believe, unresolvable) foreign crises nagging personal problems (from Whitewater and the Paula Jones case), the excruciatingly slow pace of the health care debate in Congress and the relentless criticism of his Republican opponents — they have all taken a toll on Clinton's popularity. Recent polls show that the public's approval of Clinton's performance in office is a very low 40 per cent. And while the public's perception of his work on some foreign policy issues is positive, Clinton's overall foreign policy rating is a dismal 34 per cent.

In truth, the media is partially to blame for the severity of Clinton's negative ratings. Daily stories and chilling photos of the tragedy in Rwanda, of the renewed defiance of the Bosnian Serbs and of chaos in Haiti create the impression of a world out of control. While polls also show that Americans do not want U.S. forces involved in any of these conflicts and do not place foreign policy high on their list of priorities — they remain, nevertheless, troubled by the feeling that their country, the world's only superpower, can do nothing to provide stability and order to a world in need of it.

The President's supporters point to his administration's many successes in foreign affairs and to his reordering of foreign policy priorities to emphasise economic issues as vital to U.S. national interest. As defined by President Clinton on the eve of his departure to attend the G-7 summit, the new priority for U.S. foreign policy is to "create jobs in a world of prosperity."

In particular, supporters emphasise the president's new three-pronged approach to post-cold war foreign policy: promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and a defence posture adapted to the new environment. Within this framework Clinton's supporters point to several successes in addition to those associated with the Middle East.

First, Clinton won approval for a historic \$4.1 billion in aid to Russia to support its democratic and economic reforms. Although many felt that there was no need for this programme because the cold war was over, Clinton successfully argued that the post-cold war peace had yet to be won, and demonstrating this commitment to Russia's reform programme was a worthwhile investment.

Second, despite strong opposition from his own party, Mr. Clinton invested a great deal of political capital to enact NAFTA and secure side-agreements on human rights and other issues. He also saw through the final series of the Uruguay Round of GATT to make certain that the previous seven years of negotiations weren't wasted. And on critical aspects of bilateral trade, Mr. Clinton has heavily involved his administration on behalf of major U.S. industries.

Third, on the issue of arms control, Mr. Clinton has pledged to strengthen international arms control regimes and to take the lead in negotiating a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. Administration supporters point to his steadfastness and careful diplomacy in pursuing U.S. nonproliferation goals in North Korea. They also point out that when Mr. Clinton took office, four of the former Soviet Republics had nuclear weapons, but the administration has negotiated agreements with three of them to eliminate their entire nuclear arsenals.

Yet despite these achievements, the administration is still harshly criticised in every medium for its handling of foreign policy. Only a few weeks ago the major news magazines were roundly and severely critical of the president. Said Time, "The smell of failure, fairly or unfairly, is beginning to gather around his global management team, and if he slips over that ill-defined line, he might soon be written off by friends and foes alike as incapable of crafting a strong or coherent American foreign policy." And U.S. News and World Report was no less critical when it noted, "After having been run out of Somalia, faced down in Haiti, frustrated in North Korea and trumped at every turn in

Bosnia, 'assertive multilateralism' as practiced by the Clinton administration is earning a more accurate description. Oxymoron."

In this context, the grand ceremonies in Washington last week brought a brief surge in national pride and respect for the role played by the president. Even former Secretary of State James Baker was caught up in the mood when on July 25 he had strong praise for the Democratic president saying, "The approach the Clinton administration has followed in the Middle East has absolutely been the right approach."

Mr. Baker went on to more broadly praise the administration's performance, noting "I think they're doing a very good job in the Middle East. I think they're doing a good job with respect to their policy towards Russia... They're doing a good job in terms of their policy towards Iraq and the Arab Gulf... a very good job with respect to NAFTA and GATT."

Mr. Baker offered only the qualification, "But in some other areas... there has been too much stop and go... to some extent there has been an erosion of American credibility."

But the respite and the praise were short-lived. Only July 27 at a foreign policy forum organised by the National Republican Party, the "big guns" of that party's foreign policy establishment blasted President Clinton's performance.

Mr. Baker did a quick turnaround for the forum. He accused Mr. Clinton of paying little attention to foreign affairs "until something goes wrong, and then all hell breaks loose." He said that Mr. Clinton "has squandered American credibility and undermined our preeminence around the world." Mr. Baker also accused Mr. Clinton of lacking "an overall plan and strategic direction" for his foreign policy, which he said led to "flip-flops (that) debate the currency of U.S. credibility."

Joining in the criticism were former Defence Secretary Richard Cheney, former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Mr. Cheney, who like Mr. Baker is a potential Republican candidate for president in 1996, stated that in his view the Clinton administration was one of the "least competent in the 20th century," and called Clinton's policy on Haiti an "abject national embarrassment." He also accused the Democrats of allowing the military to be dangerously underfunded.

Mr. Kissinger, in his own professorial style, criticised the administration's lack of foreign policy experience, saying, "This administration has not been able to distinguish between professional concepts and foreign policy."

The problems faced by the Clinton administration are real and complex, and — despite Republican criticisms — are no fault of their own.

Each of the crisis areas addressed by critics are too complex to be open to simple solutions. And it is a fact that there is no consensus among the various branches of government as to how to resolve them. The Pentagon, for example, has been emphatic in its opposition to a military option for Bosnia or Haiti. The Central Intelligence Agency has been most resistant to provide support to the elected Haitian government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

And Congress is deeply divided over whether or not to endorse the use of U.S. military forces to play a role in bringing order to any of these trouble spots.

What both Congress and the president know is that there is little U.S. public support for any military involvement. Polls show that public opinion is against using U.S. military forces in almost every case. In Haiti, only 38 per cent of Americans feel that vital U.S. interests are at stake, and only 45 per cent support the use of force to restore democracy in that country. Polls have consistently shown that the U.S. public is opposed to sending troops to Bosnia, where only 31 per cent feel the U.S. has a vital stake. And the numbers are even more grim with regard to Rwanda, where only 81 per cent see vital U.S. interests at stake and only 28 per cent favour the introduction of U.S. ground troops. Only in the Korean case is the public in favour of using U.S. troops, but the foreign policy establishment fears that a confrontation with North Korea will not be an easy one since it will not be supported by our regional allies or China.

Another factor compounding these problems facing the administration, which is ignored by Clinton's Republican critics, is that almost all of these crises have been "inherited" from, i.e. unresolved by, the Bush administration. The Bush

administration knew, for example, of North Korea's nuclear programme as early as 1989, and they had no Bosnia, Haiti or African policy to speak of.

A final difficulty facing the Clinton administration has been its inability to define new and consistent policies in response to these crises, mobilise public support behind their initiatives, and to build sufficient domestic and international confidence to implement their initiatives. The failure to win confidence to implement their initiatives. The failure to win European support for their short-lived "lift and strike" initiative for Bosnia; the inconsistent policy towards Haiti (and the miscommunication which led to Panama's rejection of Clinton's "safe haven" initiative which forced the President to all but abandon his new policy after only two days); the refusal of U.S. allies to support administration efforts to isolate Korea and Burma — these have all been embarrassing to the administration and have caused questions about their ability to play a leadership role in international affairs. Failures such as those have led some to suggest that Clinton has turned former President Theodore Roosevelt's maxim of "Speak softly but carry a big stick" around to "Talk tough and carry no stick at all."

While fault for these failures is being placed on the U.S. foreign policy team for not being more forceful or consistent, such criticism may not be completely fair. In the new unipolar post-cold war world, the U.S. cannot simply act alone to resolve each and every crisis. When allies, especially regional allies most affected by a particular crisis, reject U.S. initiatives; and when other countries, out of their own economic interest, seek to undercut U.S. efforts to build an international consensus regarding "outlaw" regimes; when neither the U.S. military establishment nor the Congress (not to speak of U.S. public opinion) disavow the use of U.S. forces as a tool of international conflict resolution — in such cases it becomes difficult and even foolish to proceed.

Nevertheless, the administration continues to wrestle with instituting changes in both its approaches to these conflicts and in the composition of the foreign policy team that will project and implement those policies.

Secretary of Defence William Perry has made it clear that the U.S. will respond to the Bosnia crisis by either using forces if the Serbs continue to reject peace initiatives, or to use U.S. troops as peacekeepers if the current internationally-proposed settlement is agreed to by all parties. Negotiations with the North Koreans have resumed, and efforts to resolve the crisis in Haiti continue, including the discussion of the use of military forces.

The least promising and potentially most costly U.S. venture now underway is the dispatching of U.S. troops to Rwanda and the "round the clock" airlift of humanitarian relief to Zaire to assist the million-plus Rwandan refugees in that country. Critics wrongly contend that interwar, that such a highly visible U.S. involvement at this stage will only serve to put a U.S. stamp on the continuing disaster that can only get worse in the coming months.

Finally, it should be noted that efforts are underway to create a more visible, articulate and internationally respected stamp on U.S. foreign policy. The president, himself, has focused more intently on foreign policy issues in recent months. A number of foreign visits, an increased number of foreign visitors to the U.S. and the dispatching of his administration's top communications expert (David Gergen) to the State Department to assist the Department in better communicating its foreign policy objectives and achievements are all a part of this effort.

While Secretary of State Warren Christopher remains a highly regarded member of the president's cabinet, other administration officials have also begun to play more active international roles. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown has won high marks from U.S. business leaders and from foreign officials for his successful activist policies. And Vice President Al Gore has stepped up his role as a major player in foreign affairs, a role that will be once again highlighted in September when he visits three continents to promote the administration's foreign policy efforts.

Significant changes in either the foreign policy team itself or in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in one or more regions may yet occur before the end of 1994. As the recent signing on the White House lawn showed, success is sweet and can silence critics. What will propel the administration forward in the coming months is the search for more areas of success in an effort to build greater domestic and international confidence in U.S. leadership.

Red Socks dominate lacklustre German election campaign

By Richard Murphy
Reuters

BONN — A red sock hanging on a clothes line may seem an unlikely focus of political controversy 11 weeks before an election.

But as campaigning for elections on October 16 languishes in midsummer doldrums, it is virtually the only subject Germany's main political parties are arguing about.

Christian Democratic (CDU) Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his Social Democratic (SPD) rival Rudolf Scharping have been on holiday, in Austria and France respectively, and the next state polls in this marathon election year are not due until September.

With few other issues of substance exercising the two parties at the moment, the controversial sock has become the centre of attention.

It is featured on a jokey CDU election poster intended to suggest that the Social Democrats are getting too cosy with East Germany's reformed Communists — the "Red Socks."

"Of into the future... but not with Red Socks," reads the accompanying slogan.

The poster was prompted by the SPD's decision to set up a minority coalition with the greens in an East German state that depends for survival on the tacit support of the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the reformed Communists.

The poster has produced the only real sparks in what has so far been a lacklustre

campaign, with Mr. Kohl's party accusing the Social Democrats of planning a radical leftist government in Bonn even if this means relying on PDS votes.

The Social Democrats responded in equally ironic vein, using the same theme of socks. It distributed a leaflet containing a photograph of Mr. Kohl in friendly conversation with former East German Communist leader Erich Honecker.

The punning slogan "Jetzt sind wir aber vord den Socken, Herr Kohl!" literally, "Now we're out of our socks" — is a colloquialism meaning "now we are astonished, Mr. Kohl."

Behind the silly-season humour lies a serious issue which both parties will exploit to the full when campaigning gets going in earnest — the links each accuses the other of having with East German Communists, past and present.

The SPD realises it took a gamble by opting for a leftist coalition with the backing of reformed Communists in the state of Saxony-Anhalt.

With at least one opinion poll suggesting it has lost support as a result, it has issued repeated assurances that it is not contemplating similar arrangements at national level.

"This is not a model for Bonn," Social Democrat Party Manager Guenter Verheugen said in a letter to party members. "We have nothing in common with the PDS. This party is not a partner for us. There

will be no coalition with them or government tolerated by them."

Stung by CDU charges that it broke a taboo by giving the PDS a role on the fringes of power for the first time, the Social Democrats have retaliated by reminding the CDU and its liberal Free Democrat (FDP) coalition partners that they have many East German members who once collaborated with Communists.

Mr. Verheugen pointed out that both the CDU and the FDP absorbed their East German sister parties when Germany united, even though they had been so-called "block parties" firmly under the control of the ruling Communists.

"The block parties were part of the apparatus of repression," he said.

Leading Christian Democrats in East Germany have said they will not use the "Red Socks" poster because it trivialises the real electoral threat posed by the PDS, which has won around 20 per cent of the vote in recent local elections in the region.

But CDU General Secretary Peter Hintze is unrepentant.

"The 'red socks' poster has fully achieved its purpose, which is to focus on the fact that the old Communist cadres of yesterday in the PDS are coming to power again with the help of the SPD," he said.

The reformed Communists, enjoying a resurgence of support from East Germans unhappy with the unfulfilled promises of unifica-

tion, are pleased to find themselves the centre of attention. The party even sent a tongue-in-cheek note to the CDU thanking it for its posters.

But the fate of another small party, the Free Democrats, will be of greater concern to Mr. Kohl when he returns from his lakeside retreat in Austria this month.

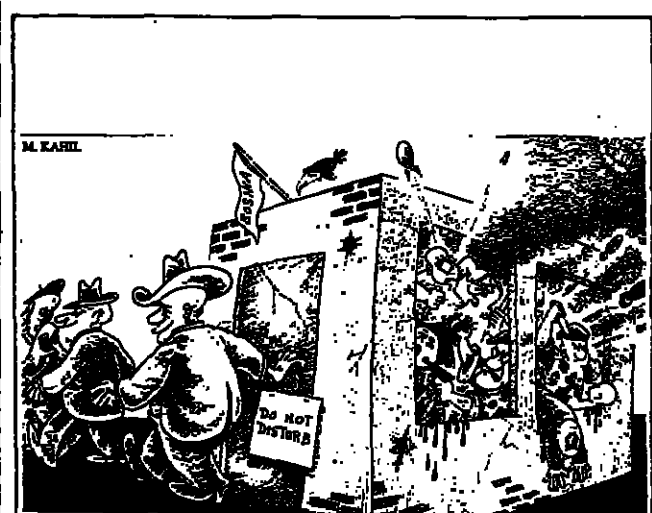
The FDP has been battered by defeats in state elections and lost all its seats in the European parliament in June, raising doubts about whether it will clear the five per cent hurdle necessary to reenter the Bonn parliament in October.

Mr. Kohl's standing in opinion polls has risen steadily as the economy climbs out of recession and most polls put him ahead of the Social Democrats, but he will almost certainly need the FDP at his side to remain in power.

The free Democrats acknowledge they are in crisis, choosing as a main election slogan: "This time everything is at stake."

Unlike the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats, they have yet to find the right image to accompany the slogan. The FDP acknowledges that preliminary photographs of leader and Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel show him looking buttoned-up and anxious.

It is looking for pictures in which he appears more confident and dynamic. Mr. Kinkel's socks are not expected to be featured.



LETTERS

Setting the record straight

To the Editor:

I WAS misquoted in the story entitled "Jordanians jubilant over summit," by Jamal Halaby of the Associated Press; (Jordan Times, July 7).

I never met the writer, not at least in the last two years, I was, however, visited by a young woman who stated she represented the Associated Press, and my answer to her question was as follows:

"Unless peace accords are accompanied by a definitive rise in standards of living on both sides of the river, I am afraid they could carry seeds of failure within them."

Osama Sha'sha's,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

News

Serbia warns Bosnia Serbs to accept peace proposal

BELGRADE (Agencies) — The Serbian government on Tuesday told Bosnia Serbs to accept an international peace plan or stand accused of "a crime against your own people."

The Bosnia Serbs have snubbed the plan, which would require them to surrender some territory won in more than two years of fighting. The proposal has been accepted by the Muslim-led Bosnian government and Croatia.

Bosnia's Serbs have come under increasing pressure from Serbia to accept the plan. Serbia and its ally in Yugoslavia, Montenegro, face tightened international sanctions unless Serbs go along with the peace proposal.

The Serbian government said in a statement that there was "no sense" keeping 11 million Yugoslavs waiting for sanctions to be lifted, and blasted Bosnia Serb leaders for delaying "until you clarify for yourselves things that are clear to the whole world."

"If you are still blinded by some selfish, personal or group interests, then you are on the way to committing a crime against your own people," Serbia said.

Although the warning was the strongest ever, it stopped short of cutting off vital funds, food and material to the Bosnia Serbs. Belgrade has been long accused of supporting Serbs in their war against Bosnia's Muslims and Croats.

The international plan — offered by the United States, Germany, France, Russia and Britain — would reduce Serb control over Bosnia from 70 per cent to 49 per cent. The rest would go to a Muslim-Croat federation.

The plan's authors rejected a Bosnia Serb offer to negotiate the proposal, and the Serbs were considering a referendum on the plan as a way of relieving pressure from their backers in Serbia and Russia.

The latest statement out of Belgrade follows a threat by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, under pressure from Russia, to cut off material support to the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr. Milosevic, the chief instigator of the wars in Bosnia and Croatia, now wants to play peacemaker and save off the economic ruin that a tightening of sanctions would likely bring.

Sanctions imposed two years ago against Yugoslavia for fomenting the war have had a severe impact, but loopholes such as Serb-owned offshore companies have allowed the country to survive.

Bosnian Serbs launched the war, which has killed an estimated 200,000 people. In April 1992 after Muslims and Croats moved to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

In Bosnia, fierce fighting near government-held Visoko northwest of Sarajevo on Monday stalled talks on reopening land routes out of the city closed by the Serbs.

At least three civilians were killed in Serb shelling across Bosnia on Monday and Tuesday, U.N. peacekeepers and Bosnian radio said.

Serbs and government officials were due to resume talks late Tuesday, said Major Rob Amink, a U.N. peacekeeper spokesman. Serbs broke off the talks on Monday to protest the Visoko fighting.

The talks were to take place on U.N.-controlled Sarajevo airport, spokeswoman Claire Grimes said.

The talks were to concentrate on the release of prisoners held by both sides as well as an exchange of information on people who have disappeared in the 27 months of fighting here.

They were also seeking an end to the use of snipers around the Bosnian capital.

U.N. coordinator Sergio Vieira de Mello was to chair the talks between the Bosnian government minister responsible for U.N. relations, Hassan Muratovic, and the president of the self-declared Bosnian Serb parliament, Momcilo Krajacic.

The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Andreas Kuhn, were also to take part, Ms. Grimes said.

U.N. officials here think the lack of progress in settling the prisoners issue is the main reason for the recent rise in tension in the city where the 380,000 inhabitants are again cut off from the outside world and taken as sniper targets.

Explaining their stay away from the talks early Tuesday, the Serbs accused the Bosnian government army of opening hostilities in the area around Visoko, 40 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo.

They refused to hold talks while the fighting continued, U.N. spokesman Dacre Holloway said.

The fighting in Visoko started early Monday and continued throughout the day, but U.N. officials said they did not know where the firing was coming from.

Lisa Jones, spokeswoman for the ICRC, said the first day of talks had agreed to concentrate initially on the exchange of prisoners and information on the missing persons in the eastern town of Gorazde and its surrounding area.

They agreed on the return of the bodies of 24 Bosnian soldiers killed by the Serbs and the exchange of information on 15 Bosnian soldiers who had disappeared.

At the same time, the government side agreed to free five out of 24 Serb soldiers held in Gorazde in return for three government soldiers held in Rado, Foca and Visegrad.

Ms. Jones said the U.N. and ICRC had decided to try to take the negotiations "step by step" rather than in one all-or-nothing package.

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — A Palestinian fighter was killed on Tuesday when resistance fighters attacked three fortified posts in occupied South Lebanon.

The fighters, who were armed with rifles and machine guns, were killed in a fierce battle with Israeli troops and their militia allies, security sources said.

In another attack guerrillas fired rockets at an Israeli-manned crossing point into Israel's South Lebanon occupation zone but there were no reports of casualties.

Despite the flareup there was no sign of a major Israeli attack feared by Lebanon since Israeli and U.S. officials blamed the pro-Iranian Hizbollah for bombing Jewish and Israeli targets in Buenos Aires and London (see page 2).

The sources said the guerrilla died attacking a post manned by Israeli troops and South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen at Braichit, a village in Israel's occupation zone a few kilometres north of the Israeli border, the sources said.

They said the Israeli and SLA forces responded by pounding nearby areas with machinegun and artillery fire.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) issued a statement late Tuesday confirming it lost one of its men in the firefight and said two other guerrillas were wounded.

The security sources identified the slain guerrilla as Mohammad Ahmad Jundi, 38, from the Nahr Al Bared Palestinian refugee camp in northern Lebanon.

But the statement issued by the PFLP later identified him as Mustafa Allal Qozbi, a Moroccan national.

There was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy.

Lebanon's mainstream pro-Syrian Shiite Muslim group Amal issued a statement claiming responsibility for attacks on SLA positions at Saïdon and Kfar Falous villages.

There were no reports of casualties.

The Israelis and SLA responded by pounding the Iqim Al Tawfik to the north with artillery fire, the sources said.

Elsewhere in South Lebanon, a Red Cross convoy of medicine and fresh water was turned back by villagers just outside Yohmor on the edge of the "security zone."

An Israeli unit punched out of the "security zone" a week ago and entered Yohmor, blocking all road approaches with earth mounds and trapping its 3,000 inhabitants.

The Israelis later retreated to hills overlooking the village, opening fire on whoever tried to remove the obstacles. Vehicle traffic is forbidden, but pedestrians are allowed to move freely, reporters who visited the area said Tuesday.

Israeli forces have acceded to a Red Cross request to bring aid into Yohmor but on Tuesday 35 villagers gathered at the earthmounds outside the village and refused to take the supplies from the Red Cross on foot, demanding instead the organisation work on reopening the road.



WAITING: A Rwandan child refugee waits for water next to American soldiers in the Kibumba camp, some 30 kilometres north of Goma, Zaire. Safe drinking water has begun to arrive in the region and started to reach some of the 1.2 million Rwandan refugees crowded in the surrounding camps (see page 5) (AFP photo)

Guerrillas attack Israelis; 1 dead

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Sanaa anxious to end U.N. role in reconciliation

SANAA (R) — Yemen, which reluctantly accepted U.N. mediation in its two-month civil war, is pressing to end the world body's involvement in post-war reconciliation, political and diplomatic sources said on Tuesday.

"We consider the (U.N.) Security Council resolutions have exhausted their purpose. The U.N. exerted efforts to end the military operations and these have already stopped," an official source said.

The war ended on July 7 with the defeat of a separatist bid in the south led by Ali Salem Al Beidh, head of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP). Mr. Beidh fled the country just before northern forces overran his breakaway state.

Sanaa has said that it viewed the civil war and aftermath as purely internal affairs and a political source said the government "believes future U.N. involvement can further complicate reconciliation efforts."

The Sanaa-based government, which argued that it fought the war to preserve the union forged in 1990, initially expressed strong reservations about Security Council ceasefire resolutions, saying they interfered in its internal affairs.

But Sanaa had accepted the resolutions reluctantly to preempt possible foreign recognition of the breakaway state set up in Aden after the civil war erupted on May 4.

It has maintained that the war was not between North and south Yemen but between a legitimate government and rebels.

"The last thing Sanaa wants to see now would be an attempt to consecrate the idea of talks between northern and southern Yemenis, and talks under U.N. auspices are bound to do exactly this," said one diplomat.

The government, snubbing U.N. efforts to promote post-war reconciliation, has insisted that a meeting in Geneva last week between U.N. troubleshooter Lakhdar (Brahimi), representatives from Sanaa and defeated secessionists did not constitute talks.

Two Security Council resolutions in June urged a political dialogue among the warring parties.

Thursday's Geneva talks were held a day after the Sanaa cabinet said in a statement it had asked the U.N. to end its role in Yemen because the war had ended. It also insisted that any dialogue should be held on Yemeni soil.

"Justifications for a dialogue outside Yemen no longer exist," an official source said. "If it is going to be a dialogue between north and south it is rejected. If it is a dialogue with rebels, they can take advantage of a general amnesty, return home and take part in the dialogue inside Yemen."

On Sunday, President Ali Abdullah Saleh gave southern exiles who backed the rebellion until Aug. 15 to take advantage of the amnesty or face constitutional and judicial measures.

The official sources said the amnesty did not include 16 rebel leaders wanted for trial, including Mr. Beidh.

Mr. Saleh said he would ask states sheltering Mr. Beidh, ex-Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas, former vice-president of the secessionist state Abdu Rahman Al Jifri and former Defence Minister Haidam Qassem Taher to hand them back for trial.

The official source said Sanaa had already started talks with members of the YSP who had not backed the secession. The former Marxist YSP ruled South Yemen until the merger with the more conservative North Yemen in 1990.

"Yemen wants its U.N. file to be closed and that dialogue inside the country be encouraged," he said.

Rabin: No Jerusalem talks now

(Continued from page 1)

tion of principles on autonomy.

Dr. Shaath was speaking to journalists upon arrival in the Egyptian capital to head the Palestinian team in negotiations on extending autonomy in the West Bank that resumed Monday.

The DoP, he noted, says negotiations over the city can start "as soon as possible but not later than the beginning of the third year," following the launch in May of self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"So what Mr. Arafat said about starting the negotiations now is entirely correct," he added.

"Jerusalem is at the heart of our negotiations on a permanent settlement and we will not accept any preemption of that right between now and then," Mr. Shaath said.

On the West Bank autonomy talks, both Dr. Shaath and General Danny Rothchild, head of the Israeli team, said the toughest problem facing the transfer of power to the Palestinian authority was finances.

"One thing both of us know is that without financing, nothing can be done," Mr. Rothchild said.

Delegates opened talks Tuesday on tourism and social welfare, while talks on education and health were continuing.

Dr. Shaath also said negotiations on security issues would start once the civilian track was completed, while talks on elections for a Palestinian council are scheduled to begin on Aug. 8.

The delegates are expected to round up their latest session on Thursday.

Dr. Shaath expressed hope the talks here can be ended by early next week. But Gen. Rothchild has said this is optimistic, noting the issue of budgeting touches on all subjects involved in the talks on so-called early empowerment.

The negotiations, in their third week, resumed Monday but did not get to the money issue until Dr. Shaath's return from Gaza. Draft agreements on health and education were reported last week, and Israelis said Tuesday the talks were making continued progress but gave no details.

Gen. Rothchild suggested that Israel train Palestinians to run tax collection as a step in a transitional programme which is yet to be worked out.

The Palestinians announced formation of a tax authority earlier this week. It is studying ways to train tax collectors as well as taking over tax record and computer systems from Israeli occupation authorities, said Dr. Shaath, the planning minister in the PLO's Gaza-Jericho administration.

Dr. Shaath said each of the three would send a professional delegation to discuss regional environmental issues.

"It's a meeting of experts, and they are going to talk about problems related to the three sides," the spokesman said.

Iraqi Christians accuse Kurds of taking land

ZAKHO, Iraq (AFP) — Northern Iraqi Christians forced from their homes by government troops charge they have now been dispossessed a second time — by Kurds holding the region in defiance of the government.

"The problem is the Kurds are occupying our villages and preventing our people from returning to their lands," complained Peter Petrus, a priest in the town of Zakho.

The nearby village of Kani-Masi was entirely inhabited by Christians before its destruction by Iraqi troops in 1987.

Today, Kurdish families live among the ruins.

"What choice do we have? Our own village, right at the top of the mountain, is destroyed and there's nobody to help us rebuild," said Arslan Ahmad, head of one of the 30 Kurdish families squatting in the ruins. "We will wait here until help arrives."

But a Christian who used to live in the village doubts they will ever move on. "I'm sure they'll stay because their land is not as good as ours," he said, asking not to be named.

Between 50,000 and 100,000 Christians — from a total of around one million throughout Iraq — live in Iraqi Kurdistan, which since 1991 has been held by the Kurds in defiance of Baghdad after an anti-government rebellion.

The Kurdish official in charge of housing, Yonakam Kanna, said around 100 villages had been taken over like Kani-Masi. He blamed the policy of destruction and confiscation carried out by the Iraqi army.

In Sersik village, 125 families from the clan of Kurdish leader Massud Barzani have settled on communal lands which were expropriated from the Christians.

But Mr. Kanna, himself a Christian, says Baghdad had compensated the original owners at the time.

"Our Kurdish government is young and facing a lot of other problems. We hope this land dispute will be settled in the future," said Shmuel Benyamin, deputy in the Kurdish parliament.

Sargon Slivo of the Assyrian Democratic Party representing the Christians pointed out that his community and the Kurds had long experience of living together.

"We experienced the same threat from the Iraqi government and fought together in the mountains," he said.

The Christians, almost all descendants of the Assyrians who built one of the world's first civilisations 6,000 years ago, have won new rights under the Kurdish administration that were denied them under Baghdad's rule.

They have a radio station broadcasting in their own language, Aramaic, which is also taught in schools. The Assyrians, a small minority among the Christians, also have their own schools and churches.

"Since the Kurdish ministry for education couldn't afford to print schoolbooks in the Assyrian language, we had to print them ourselves," said Mr. Benyamin.

Several other policemen now face further charges of embezzlement and abuse of authority in the continuing investigation.

The case has seriously strained relations between Thailand and Saudi Arabia, which has declared it will not reopen its lucrative labour market to Thai workers until those responsible are punished.

But Riyadh said 75 per cent of the returned jewellery was fake and forced the police department to reopen the case, with Saudi the key state witness.

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King voices confidence in people

(Continued from page 1)

the other tracks of the negotiations are active and that this will hopefully result in real progress very soon.

The King emphasised that the Washington Declaration's reference to ending the state of belligerency between Jordan and Israel is something that he had voiced many years ago, and that Jordan had effectively accepted this notion by subscribing to United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

On Jerusalem, the King reiterated that Jordan and the Hashemite family have a historic role in the Holy City, and that this role will continue, emphasising that this is a claim made by Jordan not for itself, but for the entire Islamic Ummah.

The King separated the religious dimension from the political stressing that it will be the PLO that will be negotiating over the political final status of Jerusalem in the future.

On relations with Syria and the question of Arab co-ordination, the King explained that when he last met with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, he was very frank with him, and that since then President Assad has shown no surprise and had indicated that he was aware of the present mood in Jordan, particularly Jordan's sovereign right to move ahead in pursuit of attaining its rights.

The King said that Jordan was the first to point to the lack of coordination and that co-ordination under any definition means two sides co-ordinating to reach a certain objective not one side following the other on everything they wish.

On opposition to the peace process in Jordan and elsewhere, the King said that in terms of the recent acts of violence "we have to brace ourselves for more of that" until the peace process leads to big changes in the region in terms of the psychology of people and when the benefits of peace are seriously felt.

On relations with PLO the King said Jordan would do its utmost to help and support the Palestinian autonomy. In this regard the King stated categorically that Jordan is not interested in taking over political sovereignty whatsoever.

The King emphasised Jordan's adherence to the 1974 Rabat summit's decision and to the PLO's status as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, until such a time as the Palestinians themselves decide otherwise. Relations with the PLO in the future will be conducted on a case by case basis, the King said.

The meeting was attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Jordanian Ambassador in London, Fouad Ayyoub.

After cheers, Beirut media assess extent of freedom

By Jacques Lhuillier
Agence France Presse

BEIRUT — After the cheers that filled private television and radio stations last week when the authorities lifted a four-month ban on news broadcasts, editors are now assessing the extent of their freedom.

"It is true that we've been allowed back on the air but will we really be free or only allowed to broadcast hollow news?" a journalist who declined to be named asked, echoing the concerns of many colleagues.

Within seconds of President Elias Hrawi ratifying a bill to allow the temporary resumption of private news broadcasts last Friday, parties broke out in broadcasting stations and news programmes were back on the air.

But the stations were cautioned against broadcasting any political programmes which could incite religious strife.

The bill was passed overwhelmingly by parliament in mid-July despite strong opposition from Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri's government which ordered the ban in March, restricting news coverage to state-run Tele Liban and Radio Liban.

But the new law awaits the approval of legislation to regulate the media in Lebanon, where more than 150 broadcasting stations sprang up — most of them illegally — during the 1975-1990 war.

As soon as the bill was ratified, the directors of the main private stations met and set up a "self-censorship commission" aimed at dealing with sensitive information such as defence, security or judicial matters.

"We are recovering some of our freedom. It's not perfect but it's better than nothing," Pierre Daher, head of the strongest channel, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), told AFP.

"Of course we're very happy but we must be on our guard. The media is always the first target," Mr. Daher added.

He said LBC would steer clear of "sensitive issues such as anything that deals with South Lebanon, internal security, or judicial affairs like the Geagea file," adding that judicial reports would be cleared by the authorities.

When the government ordered the ban on March 23, charging that some news broadcasts were inciting religious strife, it also outlawed the Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) party of Samir Geagea who controlled the LBC.

Dr. Geagea's LF militia was implicated in a February church bombing which killed 11 worshippers, and he has since been indicted on three charges punishable by death.

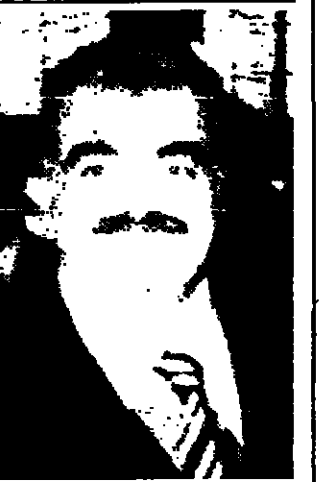
Qassem Jazfar, head of the channel NTV, ruled out any attempts to quash freedom of the press in Lebanon, home to what was long considered to be the freest media in the Arab World.

Mr. Jazfar was uncomfortable with the word "self-censorship."

"It is better to speak of in-house rules based on a code of honour. Because, don't forget, Lebanon is still a fragile country and one which is at war with Israel," he said.

But at the ICN channel of Christian business tycoon Henry Steir, the mood, said editor-in-chief Antoine Shamiye, is opposed to "making deals at the expense of the right of the people to be informed."

For Mr. Shamiye, there are



Rafik Al Hariri

no taboos in news and the right to inform.

But for some, like the editor of the Sawt Al Watan radio, Mohammad Abi Harfush, self-censorship has long been a norm to "avoid broadcasting information that could fuel religious strife."

The fact remains that Lebanon, a country of only 10,425 kilometres and still licking its wounds after 15 years of civil strife, has no less than 52 private television and 100 radio stations.



The two were the wife and son of Satri Srihanakhan, a gem trader who was arrested on charges of having bought some of the \$20 million of jewellery stolen from the Riyadh palace of a Saudi prince in 1990. He later turned state witness.

Santi's whereabouts were not known. He did not show up for his family's funeral, police said.

National police chief General Pratin Santiprab told reporters on Tuesday preliminary examination showed the two were killed by blows from a hard blunt object, not the force of a collision. Police are investigating.

Santi's testimony led to the arrest of at least seven people, including three policemen, on charges of embezzling the stolen jewellery after taking it away from Thai worker Kriangkrai Techomong. They were convicted but the case is under appeal.

Kriangkrai stole the jewellery in 1990 from a Saudi Arabian palace he worked for. Police said that after arresting and convicting him they returned the jewellery to Riyadh.

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IOC supports Goodwill Games

ST. PETERSBURG (R) — The Goodwill Games, spawned in the cold war as a response to successive Olympic boycotts, have now received the stamp of approval from the Olympic movement.

The games were conceived by Atlanta cable television mogul Ted Turner in 1983 to give American athletics the chance to compete against their Soviet counterparts.

The first games were staged in Moscow in 1986, the second four years later in Seattle and the third have reached the halfway stage in St. Petersburg, city of the czars.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch was conspicuous presence at last Saturday's opening ceremony and Monday Turner said the IOC chief now fully supported the concept of the four-year multi-sports games.

"The Olympic games were smarting," Turner told a news conference as he recalled his brash promise to set up his own multi-sports event. "There was a lack of communication between the Olympic officials and myself."

Now, Turner said, the IOC and the Goodwill Games organisers were dealing with the same sporting federations and he was consulting regularly with Samaranch.

"It makes sense for us to do that," Turner said. "And I wish we had done that from the very beginning."

"Somebody asked (Samaranch): 'You were against the Goodwill Games in 1980, now you're for it' and he said 'that's right'."

Turner said the original intent of the games had been to stop the Olympic boycott.

"If you recall there were two Olympic boycotts," Turner said. "And then the Olympics went to South Korea (the 1988 Seoul Olympics). Russians didn't have diplomatic relations with South Korea."

"The Olympic committee voted to take a very, very controversial place considering the Olympic boycott."

"I'm willing to bet that without the Goodwill Games the Soviet and eastern bloc teams would not have gone to South Korea."

Italy's goalkeeper Pagliuca joins Inter

MILAN (R) — Italian World Cup goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca has joined Internazionale from Sampdoria in an exchange deal which sees former national team players Walter Zenga and Riccardo Ferri moving in the opposite direction.

Inter confirmed the deal had been finalised at a press conference Monday. Pagliuca, 27, has signed a four-year contract with the Milan Club.

The goalkeeper had a mixed World Cup, serving a two-match suspension for a sending-off, but returning and performing well as Italy reached the final.

He will replace the popular Zenga, his predecessor as Italy's number one, between the posts for Inter. Ferri, a defender, won 45 caps for Italy but has been troubled by injury in recent seasons.



Gianluca Pagliuca

Volkov survives scare at Los Angeles Open

LOS ANGELES (R) — Fourth seed Alexander Volkov of Russia survived a scare in the first round of the \$13,750 Los Angeles Open Monday.

Volkov saved two match points before beating American Bryan Shelton 6-7, 7-6, 6-3 in two hours and 37 minutes to safely reach the second round of the hard court event.

Fifth-seeded Dutchman Richard Krajicek used his booming serve to successfully begin his title defence with a 7-6, 6-1 victory over American Michael Joyce.

Krajicek took control by dominating the tie-break 7-1 and never let Joyce back into the match.

Eighth seed Karsten Braasch of Germany rolled past South African qualifier David Nainkin 6-3, 6-0 complete an upset-free opening day.

Top seed Michael Chang, second seed Boris Becker and third seed Andre Agassi, fresh from his title at the Canadian Open Sunday, were scheduled to play their opening-round matches Tuesday.

Volkov, ranked 27th in the world, quickly fell behind the

93rd-ranked Shelton 2-5 in the first tie-break after both players held their serves throughout the set. Shelton kept on the attack and closed out the tie-break 7-5.

The second set was a near carbon copy of the first as neither Shelton nor Volkov could produce a service break. Volkov did turn away one break point, which was also a match point, in the 12th game with a forehand winner.

Shelton reached his second match point at 6-5 in the second set tie-break. But the American double-faulted and Volkov took advantage of the misfire as the fourth seed went on to win 9-7.

The hard-serving Shelton pounded 15 aces, but he also hit 10 double faults and Volkov maintained the momentum from his tie-break who in the deciding set.

Volkov said the first match point was saved by skill, but he admitted that luck played a role in his ability to turn back the second one.

"We were both playing so hard and the score was also so close that I knew I could win the first match point," Volkov said.

Dream Team II makes reality harsh for foes

TORONTO (AFP) — Dream Team II has inflicted a harsh reality on the other 15 teams arriving here for the World Basketball Championships — they are all playing for second place.

The 12 National Basketball Association (NBA) stars representing the United States are likely to repeat the gold medal success of the original Dream Team from the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Even a second-place showing is a lofty goal for all but Croatia in the 16-team world finals that begin Thursday and conclude August 14.

"We should beat anybody we play handily, so we just have to prepare to beat anybody who comes along," U.S. coach Don Nelson said. "I think Croatia will be the best opponent, but I'm not 100 per cent sure. You can be surprised in the international game." Rivals agree that no one will surprise Dream Team II, which assembled only two weeks before their opening game Thursday against Spain.

"Taking the gold seems

impossible," so we should be satisfied with silver," Croatia coach Giuseppe Giorgia said.

Dream Team II includes Shaquille O'Neal and Alonzo Mourning at centre, forwards Dominique Wilkins, Shawn Kemp, Larry Johnson and Dominique Wilkins plus guards Reggie Miller, Joe Dumars, Kevin Johnson, Mark Price, Dan Majerle and Steve Smith.

"They are a bunch of young guys who haven't won anything yet," Nelson said. "Until we have that gold medal around our necks, we have to win by as much as we can. We're not taking anything for granted. We're working hard to be ready."

Barcelona silver medalist Croatia is a solid favourite to finish second again behind NBA players Toni Kukoc of Chicago and Dino Radja of Boston plus centre Stojan Vrankovic.

"The USA will win the gold. We will take the silver and Canada will win the bronze," Kukoc said. "We have to realize it will be hard to achieve that and play with

Legacy of 1984 Olympics survives — in streets, pools, gyms

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A decade ago, the Olympics provided Los Angeles a shining moment, a charmed time for a city that in later years was battered by rioting, earthquakes and fires.

While those glorious weeks of light freeway traffic, a drop in crime, and smiling strangers saying "hello" on the streets are a distant memory, the legacy of the 1984 games lives on in Los Angeles.

In the unlikely setting of an inner city beach volleyball court, Rose Villacarlos dives into the sand hauled in from the seaside, slaps the ball skyward, and yells in delight as a teammate spikes it over the net.

Across town in east Los Angeles, father Carmine Vairo watches approvingly as youngsters whoop and slip down the slide and into the pool.

Near downtown Los Angeles, Richard Allen looks around the old building being transformed into a state-of-the-art gymnasium and explains how he envisions it as a haven where children and their parents who live in a "war zone" of gangs and crime can come to work out or to watch amateur boxing matches.

Over by the coliseum, Robert Arellanes talks about the kids in sports programme that will give urban youths and their parents the binding, growing tradition in sports that suburban kids enjoy. At Dorsey High School in south central Los Angeles, Monika Schloder demonstrates to a group of minority coaches the latest methods of teaching youngsters how to swim.

The 15-year-old Villacarlos, the youngsters at the Salesian Boys and Girls Club, the children and parents who will use Allen's gym, and the others are beneficiaries from the 1984 Olympics.

Those games, which began on July 28, were the first free-enterprise Olympics and left a gift for amateur sports in America and for youth in southern California in particular.

The \$225 million profit from the LA Olympics was divided among the U.S. Olympic Committee and various national sports federations.

Atlanta, host of the 1996 Olympics, will have to build more facilities for its games, and it plans to donate those facilities as its main bequest.

"We learned a lot just from meeting with people from Los Angeles," said Bob Brennan, spokesman for the Atlanta organising committee. "We continue to pick the brains of those people there who can help us."

"I think the uniqueness of the '84 games had to do with the fact that we worked cooperatively with government," said Anita DeFranz, who was in charge of the Olympic athletes' housing at the University of Southern California 10 years ago and now is the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board.

"We paid for extra services from government, such as security, but ours was a contractual relationship with government."

The bottom line was a huge profit.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amunike joins Sporting Lisbon

LISBON (AFP) — Nigerian World Cup striker Emmanuel Amunike is at the centre of a transfer tug-of-war between Sporting Lisbon and German club Duisburg.

Amunike signed a three-year contract with the Portuguese club here late Monday, turning his back on a prior agreement to join the Bundesliga. "Amunike was under pressure when he signed the contract with Duisburg," said Sousa Cintra, president of Sporting Lisbon, announcing the new signing.

He said the German club had made no contact with Amunike's previous club, African champions Zamalek of Cairo. "FIFA will have to rule on this problem," he added.

Amunike, one of the inspirations of the Nigerian side which almost beat Italy in the second round of the World Cup in Boston, Massachusetts, was forced to sign for the German club, according to Cintra, invalidating the deal.

"Amunike only signed because of pressure from Nigerian coach Clemens Westerhoff, who told the player that unless he signed he would not be picked to play during the World Cup," said Cintra. Westerhoff ended a five-year term as Nigerian coach at the end of the World Cup.

Plecknik returns to Denmark

COPENHAGEN (R) — Danish first division side AGF Kontraktfobold said Monday they had signed central defender Torben Plecknik from Liverpool in a two-year contract.

Plecknik, 31, joined Liverpool from FC Copenhagen after winning the European championship with Denmark in 1992, but saw little premier division action in his second season in England.

Van Almsick off to U.S.

BERLIN (AFP) — Franziska van Almsick, the 16-year-old German swimming star, is moving to Florida after the world championships in Rome next month.

Almsick said she would enrol at high school in Coral Springs, because "I must improve my English." She will continue to compete, notably in the World Cup in Germany next February, her manager Werner Koester said.

Greek coach to quit

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Following Greece's disastrous first showing at this summer's World Cup soccer championship, coach Alkettas "Alkis" Panagoulas said Monday he would end his association with the national team.

Panagoulas sent a letter to the Greek Soccer Federation saying that he did not want to renew his contract that ends Aug. 31. The 60-year-old coach thanked the federation for having entrusted him with the national team. Panagoulas, a former coach of the U.S. national team, coached Greece since 1992, helping it win its first ticket to the World Cup's final rounds. But this victory was forgotten in a blizzard of goals that overwhelmed the team in the first round in the United States. Greece lost 4-0 to Argentina, 4-0 to Bulgaria, and 2-0 to Nigeria, leaving for home with the tournament's poorest showing. Panagoulas blamed his players, saying they were cowed by the competition, players blamed their coach, saying he made poor choices in his lineups and tactics. Newspapers demanded Panagoulas' sacking. He went to the United States as a student in 1961 and later became a dual citizen. He was hired in 1983 to coach team America which was part of the North American Soccer League and also served as the U.S. national coach. He led the U.S. soccer team at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, but the Americans failed to qualify for the 1986 World Cup and Panagoulas returned to Greece to coach a series of clubs before taking the helm of the Greek national squad.

Martinez edges up

MIAMI, Florida (AFP) — Spain's Conchita Martinez, winner at Stratton Mountain, edged closer to the second place in the women's world tennis ranking published Monday.

That number two spot is held by her compatriot Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario — Martinez's victim in the American tournament final on Sunday.

Following are top rankings:

1. Steffi Graf (Germany)	365.00
2. Arantxa Sanchez (Spain)	245.68
3. Conchita Martinez (Spain)	223.44
4. Martina Navratilova (USA)	172.83
5. Kimiko Date (Japan)	132.10
6. Lindsay Davenport (USA)	126.14
7. Mary Pierce (France)	125.57
8. Jana Novotna (Czech)	121.33
9. Natalia Zvereva (Belarus)	109.17
10. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina)	106.79
11. Mary Joe Fernandez (USA)	97.44
12. Zina Garrison-Jackson (USA)	85.36
13. Amanda Coetzer (S. Africa)	82.07
14. Anke Huber (Germany)	81.03
15. Lori McNeil (USA)	78.72
16. Sabine Hack (Germany)	77.85
17. Magdalena Maleeva (Bulgaria)	73.46
18. Julie Halard (France)	68.97
19. Helena Sukova (Czech)	65.91
20. Sabine Appelmans (Belgium)	64.55

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Ordinary Issue No. 14/1994 Drawing of August 2, 1994

Winning Tickets	
Holder of ticket No. 58942 Wins JD 40,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 3,000 each wins JD 300
Holder of ticket No. 75919 Wins JD 10,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 100
Holder of ticket No. 01847 Wins JD 5,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 700 each wins JD 70
Holder of ticket No. 66507 Wins JD 3,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 400 each wins JD 40
Holder of ticket No. 49933 Wins JD 2,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 250 each wins JD 25
Holder of ticket No. 83016 Wins JD 2,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 200 each wins JD 20
Holder of ticket No. 20206 Wins JD 1,500	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 150 each wins JD 15
Holder of ticket No. 29302 Wins JD 1,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 50 each wins JD 5

Ticket numbers 88416 89673 86415 21341 88805 win JD 200 each	
Ticket numbers 17481 55382 05915 05524 33602 win JD 100 each	

TICKETS ENDING WITH

5107 9128 3241 5995 Win JD 60 each	7999 1269 4279 Win JD 30 each
055 552 Win JD 15 each	194 977 539 711 Win JD 10 each
10 Win JD 6 each	3 (Three) Win JD 3 each

COVER PRIZES FOR THE LOTTERY SELLERS

40 covers , attached to the stub of 10 ending in 357 382 376 369 Win JD 10
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Winners of the grand prizes in the special issue number 13/1994 of July 17, 1994

Mohammed Husein 100% - Jordan Net Prize JD 20,000	Mohammed Al Khateeb 100% - Jordan Net Prize JD 20,000	Reed Marriot 100% - Jordan Net Prize JD 10,000 (100%)	Only Most Sell High-Tech JD 2,500	Net Most Sell Amman - Jordan Net Prize JD 2,500	Sayed Abdul Jawad Amman - Jordan Net Prize JD 2,500 (100%)
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Next Draw takes place on August 17, 1994

First biggest prizes are issued from GUVS headquarters

Tender Poison: New perfume in Jordan

Director General of Astra Agencies Establishment Tuesday introduced a new perfume from Christian Dior during a conference held for this purpose.

The new perfume "Tender Poison" is characterised by its high specifications, which made it unique in terms of its smell, shape of the bottled and its beautiful colour.

"Tender Poison" is extracted from fruit and lemon

and other plants including vanilla and sandal trees. All these specifications meet to add a fine touch and a nice smell.

"Tender Poison" perfume lasts throughout the day.

"Tender Poison" is the perfume of the season.

The new perfume will, put for sale on pharmacy shelves and major perfume shops, in addition to Abu Shakra Stores in Jordan.

World champions coach quits

CHICAGO, Illinois (AFP) — U.S. women's soccer coach Anson Dorrance, who guided his team to the FIFA world title in 1991, has resigned and will be replaced by assistant Tony DiCicco.

Dorrance, 43, has guided the U.S. women to a 58-22 mark with five drawn since talking over the club in 1986. He has guided North Carolina to 12 U.S. college titles.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Journalists protest Al Nahar closure

TUNIS (AP) — The International Federation of Journalists has protested Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat's closure of a newspaper, calling it an "intolerable violation of press." In a statement signed by Aiden White, the Brussels-based organisation's secretary-general, urged Mr. Arafat to reverse his decision to shut down Al-Nahar newspaper. Its closure Monday left Jerusalem with just one daily, the Al Quds. "Chairman Arafat and his colleagues have a duty to protect all shades of opinion in the Palestinian media, even those they may not like," the statement said.

Arafat's 'copters grounded in Egypt

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Two Palestinian helicopters are stranded in the Egyptian town of El Arish while Israel and the Palestinians wrangle over their licensing, a senior official said Tuesday. Abdul Aziz Haj Ahmad, transport minister in the new Palestinian authority, told AFP that Israel would not allow the choppers to be flown into the autonomous Gaza Strip unless they were registered first. "And they can't be registered with us until we bring them in. This is a typical situation of which comes first?" he said. "The Israelis want them registered, but they haven't said where. And we can't register them under the Palestine National Authority while they are abroad." The helicopters, which are for official use by Yasser Arafat and his entourage, have been stranded in El Arish for more than a month.

Lawyer reports Lockerbie contacts with U.K.

DUBAI (R) — A lawyer for two Libyans suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie bombing has said contacts were under way with Britain to select a panel of judges, including one Muslim, who would try the men at the Hague. Ibrahim Legwell told the London-based Al Wasat magazine, received by Reuters on Tuesday, that the contacts were taking place through third parties, whom he did not identify. "The current talks with Britain through third parties aim at selecting the names and number of judges... of whom one could be a Muslim and the rest from neutral countries," the Libyan lawyer was quoted as saying.

Dirani gives Arad information — Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli interrogators have obtained information about missing airman Ron Arad from a kidnapped Lebanese guerrilla leader, military officials said on Tuesday. "New details have emerged about the fate of Ron Arad during the investigation of Mustapha Dirani," said General Herzl Bodinger, Israeli air force commander. "These details, which cannot be divulged, are likely to help us in discussions and contacts currently taking place behind the scenes" to find Arad, Gen. Bodinger told Israeli radio. He said Arad, who has been missing since he was shot down over Lebanon in 1986, was "held by an Iranian group or a group supported by and acting under the orders of Iran."

Israel accepts denial of remark

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel said on Tuesday it was satisfied with British Consul-General Dalton's denial of reports he had likened Israeli behaviour in occupied lands to the Nazis and Hamas to a World War II resistance group. "The consul denied he made the comparison," foreign ministry spokesman Rafi Gamzu said. "He said this is the self-image of the (Islamic Resistance Movement) Hamas and this is their image among Palestinians — but it is not his comparison." I would say for the instant this is closed," Israel's Yedioth Ahronoth daily said on Tuesday. Israel sought clarifications after hearing that Mr. Dalton, in a closed briefing to British Labour Party supporters, said Israel acted in occupied lands like the Nazis and Hamas was like a World War II resistance group. Mr. Gamzu would not say how the alleged comments came to the attention of the foreign ministry.

Kuwait begins pay-outs to invasion victims

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti government began paying compensation to victims of the Iraqi occupation on Tuesday. An initial sum of \$1.39 million was paid to 303 Kuwaiti families, said Abdul Rahman Al Huti, chairman of the committee in charge of evaluating compensation payments. Mr. Huti told reporters here that compensation would be paid to people who were injured or lost a close relative, child or spouse during the Iraqi occupation of August 1990 to February 1991. Pay-outs would be limited to \$10,000 per family, he said. In June, Kuwait asked the United Nations compensation commission for \$94.8 billion to compensate individual, private and public losses sustained during the occupation.

U.S. to sell missiles to Turkey

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Defence Department said Monday it planned to sell nearly 600 missiles to Turkey at an estimated cost of \$137 million. The sale includes 500 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, 80 Amraam air-to-air missiles and 16 Harpoon ship-launched-guided missiles. The proposed sale would help improve the military capabilities of Turkey and contribute to U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives, the Pentagon said in a statement. Principal contractors for the missiles are Raytheon Co., Loral Corp., Hughes Aircraft and McDonnell-Douglas Corp.

Kuwait, Russia study investment pact

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait and Russia are negotiating an accord to encourage investment between the two countries, the official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported on Monday. "The agreement will cover... the freedom of cash flow between the two countries and the freedom of currency exchange," Kuwait Investment Authority official Abdullah Al Ramadhan was quoted as saying. Mr. Ramadhan, director of direct and real estate investment at KIA, the government's investment arm, said the agreement would provide for the protection of investments from non-trade risks such as civil disobedience. A Kuwaiti delegation would have talks on the accord with Russian officials in Moscow on Aug. 8, he added. The KIA is looking into the feasibility of some Russian projects, he added without elaborating.

West a base for Islamists — Ben Ali

PARIS (R) — The asylum policies of the United States, France and Britain are making them rear bases for Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas, Tunisian President Zine Ben Ali said. Mr. Ben Ali, who has outlawed Tunisia's "Al Nahda" fundamentalist movement, told the French daily Le Figaro it was now up to the West to fight Islamists. "Now, fundamentalism is your problem. I mean the problem of Paris, London, Washington," he said in the interview published on Tuesday. "France, Britain, the United States are being used as rear bases for fundamentalist terrorists... in the name of freedom and democracy, you are giving asylum to the enemies of freedom and democracy," he said. Mr. Ben Ali said he did not fear the spread to Tunisia of political violence that has been engulfing neighbouring Algeria. "I do not fear infection from Algeria because Tunisia is a healthy body," he said. He said he trusted Algeria's army-backed government would win its fight against fundamentalists. "The situation in Algeria is delicate, but it remains manageable," he said. "I am convinced the brotherly Algerian people will overcome the ordeal it is going through."



CAMBODIA OPENING UP: A Phnom Penh moneychanger counts his money near the Olympic market. Against a background of corruption, rebellion, banditry and political instability after decades of war, Cambodia is slowly trying to put its devastated

economy in order. Agriculture is one of the main sources of income for the Cambodians, but perpetual tension is depriving them of an atmosphere conducive to farming (AFP photo)

Algerian Islamists report split

PARIS (R) — Algeria's main Muslim opposition movement, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), reported a split in its leadership on Tuesday and said two leaders had been ousted after advocating a merger with more radical guerrillas.

"A FIS statement faxed to Paris said two members of the movement's 12-man leadership in exile had left: Anouar Haddam, Washington-based leader of the FIS parliamentary group, and Ahmad Zaoui, an academic living in Belgium. "Anouar Haddam and Ahmad Zaoui... preferred to work in another framework than the FIS. The FIS makes known that any statement from these two brothers does not represent its official position," the communiqué said. The FIS last week denied a statement by Mr. Haddam that the organisation's armed forces would merge with those of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and the Movement of the Islamic State (MEA).

The contradictory statements were the latest evidence so far of a struggle for control of the Islamic movement that is seeking to topple Algeria's army-backed government.

Algeria's official news agency said on Sunday that the leader of an armed GIA unit, Abdul Kader Hattab, his wife and nine followers were found buried in a mountain cave. Security sources were quoted as saying they had been killed by a rival group.

But an exiled FIS source disputed the report, saying his movement was absolutely determined to avoid Afghanistan-style feuding among Islamic groups.

At least 4,000 people — mainly security personnel and Islamic militants — have died in civil strife since the military intervened to cancel a general election in 1992 which the FIS was poised to win.

Mr. Haddam, who heads the FIS deputies elected in the first round of the unfinished vote, had said the merger was agreed at a meeting of "all the field commanders" of Islamic groups in Algeria on May 13.

The FIS said it was not represented at the May meeting and refused to dissolve itself into another organisation.

Foreign diplomats say the GIA, strongest in the Algiers area, is behind a campaign of highly-publicised assassinations of foreigners and intellectuals. Some believe it is penetrated and manipulated by the security services.

The FIS' own armed movement, the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), is larger but operates mainly in the provinces against the security forces and government targets. Most of its attacks go unreported by the official media.

Diplomats say the Islamic movement is divided between those, notably in the GIA, who favour all-out war and those, mainly in the FIS leadership, ready to negotiate with the authorities to prevent the country sliding even further into bloodshed.

Iran blast suspect dies; Tehran sees Argentina, London links

TEHRAN (R) — A suspect in a bomb attack on a Muslim shrine in Iran died in hospital here Tuesday from bullet wounds in a shoot-out with security men, the official IRNA news agency reported. Mahdi Nahvi was arrested Monday in the shoot-out. He had been sought by the authorities for the June 20 bomb attack on the mausoleum of Imam Reza in Mashhad, eastern Iran. At least 26 people were killed and 68 others wounded in the blast.

Iran blamed the main armed opposition group, Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, for the attack.

In a brief interview with Iranian television from his hospital bed on Monday, Nahvi claimed to be a member of the Mujahadeen and said he carried out the attack at the orders of the rebel group.

The Mujahadeen has denied any links with Nahvi. IRNA said the suspect died of at least two bullet wounds in the abdomen and the respiratory system. It did not say how many times he had been shot in Monday morning's shootout.

Iran's intelligence minister, Ali Fallahiyan, said in an interview with Tehran Radio Monday that Nahvi was the perpetrator of the bombing. Earlier Tuesday, Iran linked the Mashhad blast to last month's bomb attacks on Jewish and Israeli targets in Latin America and Britain, and laid blame for the bombings on Israel and the Mujahadeen.

Official Tehran Radio said in a commentary that the answer to the explosions would be found in the "axis" forged between Israel and the Mujahadeen. The Iranians refer to the outlawed group as the "monafegin," which means hypocrites in Farsi.

Iran has been trying to deflect accusations made by Israel and the United States that the Iranian-financed Hizbollah group was behind attacks apparently targeted at Jews. (see page 2).

"The view is gradually forming that the explosions in Argentina, London, and Panama were a series of coordinated and planned operations, one of the most important objectives of which was

to overshadow the crimes perpetrated by the monafegin inside Iran," Tehran Radio said in a commentary.

The broadcast alleged that "the actual objective behind the attacks was to portray Iran, which is a victim of terrorism, as a terrorist element."

On Monday, Iran challenged the United States to produce evidence to back its accusation of Iranian involvement in the bombings saying it should otherwise issue an apology.

Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judiciary, said that "Washington should provide documentation... otherwise, it should have the courage to apologise to the Iranian nation," IRNA reported.

Argentine President Carlos Menem said Monday investigators believe the Iranian embassy could have played a party in the July 18 blast.

Investigators were reported as saying the suicide bomber who drove a van packed with explosives up to Argentina's main Jewish community centre may have been an Iranian.

Iraq-Turkey pipeline may not be flushed soon

ANKARA (R) — A decision on flushing the Iraqi-Turkish oil pipeline idle since 1990 may not be reached by September, delaying the process until next year at the earliest, a Turkish oil official said on Tuesday.

"I doubt there will be a decision by September. Even if it is reached after that the pipeline cannot be flushed until next year due to the harsh winter in the region," Hayrettin Uzun, chairman of Turkey's pipeline company Botas, told Reuters.

Mr. Uzun said severe winter in Turkey's southeast and north Iraq will make inspection and repairs to the rusting 985-kilometre pipeline impossible until spring at the earliest.

He said the main problem was the distribution of humanitarian aid Iraq was to receive in return for most of the 27 million barrels of crude that will be flushed to Turkey if the process went ahead.

"The U.N. Security Council is literally saying that Iraq will not distribute this fairly, not giving it to Kurds and so forth," Mr. Uzun said.

"It (the Security Council) says it wants to distribute the goods or monitor the process," he said.

Mr. Uzun criticised the Security Council for not agreeing with Iraq's position which is against any form of international monitoring of food distribution in the country.

"Frankly I think it is impossible not to agree with the Iraqis — it is not suitable for the U.N. to be involved in the distribution of goods not barred by sanctions."

Nihal Abequa's sister arrives seeking custody of children

By Rama Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Nesime Dokur, sister of Nihal Abequa, 40, who was found killed in her New Jersey apartment on July 4, is in Jordan in a bid to regain the custody of her niece, Lisa, 6, and nephew Sami, 3, who were brought to Jordan by their father Mohammad Abequa.

Mr. Abequa has confessed to strangling his wife to death and fleeing to Jordan with the two children. He is in detention in Jordan.

Ms. Dokur told the Jordan Times on Tuesday that she had not met the children because she is still exhausted from the trip and because "everything happened too quickly."

Ms. Dokur, who was invited to Jordan by His Majesty King Hussein last Thursday, is accompanied with two attorneys, a U.S. senator's secretary and daughter.

Nancy Feinberg, Ms. Dokur's attorney, said U.S. senators and congressmen had held a meeting with the King on the Abequa case and the King later invited the Dokur family as his guests.

Ms. Feinberg said that the meeting with the King was successful, and that the conclusion was that Jordan would cooperate to speed up things.

The attorney said that she and her husband are representing Ms. Dokur and Maryem Gussal, the mother of the victim.

"It was made clear to us that we are not coming for a long visit, but to attend an informal and quick hearing, and that the children's custody will be determined under the Islamic law," she told the Jordan Times.

The attorney said that she was seeking a Jordanian lawyer to represent Ms. Dokur and Ms. Gussal in the case since the Jordanian law only allows Jordanian lawyers to defend cases.

"We have faith in Jordanian justice and we have brought all the necessary evidence and proof of identity for the children to be presented in courts," Ms. Feinberg said.

The two children are staying with Mr. Abequa's mother.

No Abequa family member could be reached for comment on the issue, but Rukieh, one of Mr. Abequa's sisters, told the Jordan Times in a recent interview that Ms. Dokur was more than welcome to visit the children if she came to Jordan.

"My family doesn't mind if she wants to visit the children," she said. However, she would not comment on the child custody issue.

An Associated Press report quoting one of Mr. Abequa's brothers as saying: "My family is willing to meet with Ms. Dokur to discuss the issue in a friendly manner."

"If she wants to meet with us we are ready. If she wants to take us to court we are also ready," he told the AP.

Iyad Jaradat, a Jordanian lawyer, told the Jordan Times that "most likely the custody of the children will go to the grandmother of the children — Nihal Abequa's mother — in the U.S."

Mr. Jaradat said that according to the Islamic Sharia, the mother of the wife is entitled first to the custody of the children. If she is not alive, he added, the custody will go to the mother of the father.

Mr. Abequa faces charges of killing his wife and kidnapping their children.

Mr. Jaradat said Mr. Abequa did not have the right to leave the U.S. with the children without the approval of the mother, if she was alive, or the guardian of the children since a court hearing was coming up on the children's custody.

Rabin, Peres agree on 'truce'

The Jerusalem Post

PRIME MINISTER Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres held a reconciliation meeting Monday at which they set up a framework that would enable them to work together to promote the peace process.

No details of the two-hour meeting were revealed, but Labour sources said with satisfaction yesterday that the differences between the two had been ironed out.

It is now hoped in Labour that both its leaders will work together to solve internal problems as well, such as Labour's difficult financial situation and the divisions resulting from the Histadrut elections.

Rabin implied that there were no ideological differences between himself and Peres, and said that the personal disputes are not really relevant "to the heart of the peace process."

"I see the Washington Declaration as an achievement of significance," he said. "Peres and I are partners to the peace process since the government was established, with Peres serving as foreign minister and myself as prime minister."

"I don't want to go into whether there is or isn't a crisis. Let's remember that this has no connection to the issues at hand. Each of us acted in his field to bring about the Washington Declaration, and if there are problems here and there, they have no bearing on our joint desire to promote the peace process," Rabin said.

Attorney Giora Eini, who has served as adviser and confidante to both Peres and Rabin had arranged the meeting.

Eini met with Rabin and Peres separately to set up the meeting, and was in Rabin's office yesterday with the agenda they had prepared, when Peres arrived.

Rabin and Peres decided at the meeting that Rabin would continue to be in charge of the bilateral negotiations with Jordan, Syria and the PLO, while Peres would be responsible for the multi-lateral talks and the foreign ministers' forum.

Labour sources said, however, that Peres's desire to be more than merely a bystander in the political process may lead to more clashes between the two.

COLUMN

Heidi Fleiss, father deny money laundering charges

LOS ANGELES (R) — Alleged "Hollywood madam" Heidi Fleiss and her physician father Monday pleaded not guilty to federal charges of laundering money from her high-priced call-girl ring. They also pleaded innocent to charges of making false statements to obtain a bank loan and Heidi Fleiss denied a single count of tax evasion. U.S. Judge Consuelo Marshall, who presided over Monday's arraignment, set a trial date of Oct. 11. Ms. Fleiss, 28, and her father, Dr. Paul Fleiss, were indicted by a federal grand jury Thursday on six counts of money laundering, one count of conspiracy and two counts of making false statements to obtain a bank mortgage. Dr. Fleiss, 60, was also charged individually with making four more false statements to obtain a mortgage. Heidi Fleiss pleaded not guilty last year to charges that she ran a high-priced call girl ring catering to stars and entertainment moguls. Her trial in that case, in which she is charged with five counts of pandering and one of possessing cocaine, is set to begin on Aug. 22. Heidi Fleiss' lead attorney, Anthony Brookler, said outside court Monday he expects the state case to proceed first. Prior to their arraignment, father and daughter made a brief initial federal court appearance before a U.S. magistrate Monday. They were asked if they had seen the indictment and had been read their rights before being taken away for processing.

LOS ANGELES (R) — A girl whose high school entrance exam scores were too low to merit free tuition was so ashamed by the prospect of exorbitant fees she killed herself with pesticide, official newspapers said Tuesday.

Chen Xuyuan, 15, said in a handwritten note her family could not afford the 15,000 yuan (\$1,740) that friends told her was demanded of pupils falling short in their exams. "Please forgive me for my filial failure," she wrote to her parents, who earn only 800 yuan (\$93) a year, the China Business Times said from her east China hometown of Nanjing. "I can't suffer the dirty looks of others. I have no right to ask you to shoulder the cost of my tuition," she said. Chen was so distraught that she swallowed a fatal dose of pesticide on July 19, the China Youth Daily said. China's schools at all levels are scrambling to find new sources of income to make up for shrinking state subsidies. Primary and secondary schools are quickly embracing tuition increases, and many have adopted tuition schemes that penalise students with less-than-excellent marks. Popular vocational high schools charge as much as 9,900 yuan (\$1,150) a year in tuition, possibly in violation of state policies, the China Business Times said. Officials said Chen scored 554 points on an examination to enter Lianyung Port High School of Finance — just eight points below the cut-off point for free tuition.

Girl kills herself over exorbitant tuition

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Rolling Stones begin world tour in Washington

WASHINGTON (R) — The middle-aged members of the Rolling Stones proved time was on their side Monday, swaggering and rocking with a muscular, energetic sound as they launched their world tour. Led by 51-year-old singer Mick Jagger, the Stones belted out hit songs ranging from the 1960s to material fresh off of their latest album, Voodoo Lounge. The group, which is touring the United States, Canada, Latin America, Asia and Europe, performed such rock 'n' roll classics as Satisfaction and Honky Tonk Women. Surrounded by a sea of young and old fans sporting T-shirts and buttons with the Stones' sexy lips-and-tongue logo, the British band played almost non-stop for over two hours at Washington's RFK Memorial Stadium.

On Mr. Abequa's charge that his wife was seeing another man, Ms. Feinberg said that neighbours of the victim testified to police that they never saw a man going to the woman's apartment after she was separated from her husband.

Ms. Feinberg added that her late client visited her on March 1994 to file for divorce. She said Nihal told her that Mr. Abequa had left for Jordan to find a job there and that he was going to start a new life there.

"Based on that she came to me and asked me to start divorce procedures," she said.

Nihal claimed that she had received several death threats from her husband, the lawyer said.